TU FU

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CHINESE POET

Arranged from his poems
and translated by

FLORENCE AYSCOUGH

author of

A CHINESE MIRROR

and co-author
with Amy Lowell of

FIR-FLOWER TABLETS

$5.00

TU FU

The Autobiography of a Chinese Poet

By Florence Ayscough

'MAN Who Delights in Beauty' is what the Chinese call Tu Fu. He sprang from a family of great scholars; he lived during the great years of the T'ang dynasty. He was honoured by emperors and princes, and his poems live still in the hearts of the Chinese.

Mrs. Ayscough has written a full biography of Tu Fu, year by year, and inserted in their proper chronological order exquisite translations of a large number of his poems. In commenting on the poems she gives not only every detail known about Tu Fu, but topographical notes, a brief history of China during his life, and full accounts of the lives of all important people mentioned. The publication of the first volume of this important work will be an event for all readers who have discovered the beauties of Chinese poetry.

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By the Same Author

A CHINESE MIRROR:
being the Reflections of Reality behind Appearance

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CHINESE DOG

FIR-FLOWER TABLETS:
Poems translated from the Chinese by Florence Ayscough.
English Versions by Amy Lowell

Proem to WITHIN THE WALLS OF NANKING
by Alice Tisdale Hobart

TU FU

from a photograph of the wooden image which sits in his shrine at Ch'êng Tu

TU FU

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CHINESE POET

A.D. 712–770

杜甫

Including an Historical Year Record, a Biographical Index, and a Topographical Note, as well as Maps, Plans, and Illustrations

Arranged from his poems and translated by

FLORENCE AYSCOUGH

I

A.D. 712–759

BOSTON & NEW YORK: HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

LONDON: JONATHAN CAPE

DEDICATED

TO THE MEMORY OF

THE MANY

INCORRUPTIBLE OFFICIALS

WHO SERVED AS LINCH-PINS TO

THE WHEELS

IN THE

CHINESE CHARIOT OF GOVERNMENT

'These all for their virtuous administration are celebrated in song;
Verily because of this their good name is manifest.'

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
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FROME

Table of Contents

	PAGE
PREFACE	9
INTRODUCTION	23
THE EARLY YEARS OF T'ANG	27
CHILDHOOD TIME	33
EARLY YEARS TIME	41
AT THE ANCESTRAL HOME	45
GIVING WAY TO CAROUSAL TIME	
PART I: YEARS IN CH'I	49
PART II: TWO YEARS IN THE EASTERN CAPITAL	61
PART III: FRIENDSHIP WITH LI YUNG AND LI T'AI-PO	68
MIDDLE LIFE TIME	
PART I: RETURN TO THE CAPITAL	81
PART II: FRIENDSHIP WITH WEI CHI	89
PART III: AT THE EAST CAPITAL	96
PART IV: IN CH'ANG AN	99
PART V: BORDER WARFARE	117
PART VI: THE THREE GREAT RITES	129
PART VII: AT THE HAMLET OF TU	136
PART VIII: THE RISE OF THE YANG CLAN	138
PART IX: EXCURSIONS ABOUT THE CAPITAL	158
PART X: THE BREATH OF KILLING ON THE NORTH-EAST BORDER	181
PART XI: JOURNEY TO THE DISTRICT OF FÊNG HSIEN	187
PART XII: FROM WHITE WATERS TO THREE STREAMS	201
PART XIII: JOURNEY TOWARDS LING WU	218
PART XIV: CAPTIVITY IN CH'ANG AN. 1 AND 2	223

PAGE

PART XV: TU FU THE CENSOR

1. ARRIVAL AT THE TRAVELLING PALACE 248
2. THE MATTER CONCERNING FANG KUAN 254
3. DUTIES AT THE TRAVELLING PALACE 257
4. TRAVELLING NORTH 261
5. IN THE CAPITAL 283

PART XVI: TU FU THE MINOR OFFICIAL

1. AT HUA CHOU 307
2. A VISIT TO THE EAST CAPITAL 320
3. RETURNING TO HUA CHOU 329
4. AT HUA CHOU 340

APPENDICES

TITLES OF POEMS BY TU FU FROM THE TU SHIH CHING CH'ÜAN 345
TOPOGRAPHICAL NOTE 351
HISTORICAL YEAR RECORD 358
BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX 399
BIBLIOGRAPHY:
CHINESE BOOKS 429
NON-CHINESE BOOKS 429
GLOSSARY OF UNFAMILIAR TERMS 431

INDEX 441

List of Illustrations

		PAGE
FIGURE OF TU FU	*Frontispiece*	
THE WU POSTURING DANCE		34
THE ARROW OF PRINCE I		35
WRITING LARGE CHARACTERS		37
PLAYING HAWK AND CHICKENS		42
AGED TEN AND FOUR OR FIVE		43
WITH SU THE MARQUIS		51
LIVING IN RETIREMENT ON ITS SLOPES		54
HE ADMIRED THEIR PICTURES		56
HIS MARRIAGE WAS CONSUMMATED		62
I THINK OF LITTLE BOAT		65
PORTRAIT OF LI T'AI-PO		68
THE BLACK CHARIOT HOOD		71
SU CHIN		85
AT TRAVELLERS' INN		86
SCHOLAR AND HIS 'CH'IN'		94
A DAUGHTER IS BORN		103
TU WEI IN HIS FUR ROBE		110
MAIDENS WHO PERFORM POSTURING DANCES		112
THE WADDED GARMENT		118
ROUGH FELLOWS FROM THE NORTH		126
YANG KUEI-FEI AND HER PARROT		139
ON THE SEVENTH OF THE SEVENTH MOON		140
THE FLOWERS OF YANG		141
EMBROIDERING SILK		142
THE LADY KUO KUO		143
THE LADY KUO KUO GOES TO COURT		147
THE WESTERN EMPRESS MOTHER		151
KUO THE 'T'OU HU' PLAYER		152
BUYING CHRYSANTHEMUMS		159
PLAYING 'WEI CH'I'		161

	PAGE
PLAYING THE FLAGEOLET	169
TU FU THE OFFICIAL	179
PAINTING	197
CALLIGRAPHY	202
HOW WIDE THE VIEW	205
A 'PU LIEN' OR PALACE CHAIR	225
NO HOUSEHOLD	231
SPRING – I HATE BEING CUT APART	232
CHI TZŬ	235
BUDDHA'S FOLLOWERS	242
SMALL BOYS SWEEP SO CLEAN	245
THE RABBIT PREPARES DRUGS OF IMMORTALITY	259
TRAVELLING NORTH	271
BLACK EYE-STONE	275
LOOKING DOWN ON A MIRROR	291
PALACE LADIES	292
THE LADY CHANG	294
PLAYING THE 'SHÊNG'	298
DEPARTURE OF NING KUO	312
A 'LOU' OR STORIED BUILDING	314
NOT YEH CH'ÊNG OR ITS ENVIRONS	327
THE HEAD-DRESS OF A VIRGIN	333
OPEN THE PAVILION DOOR	342

LIST OF MAPS AND PLANS

TU FU'S JOURNEYS, A.D. 732-759	*page* 80
SKETCH MAP OF COUNTRY ABOUT CH'ANG AN	*End of volume*
PLANS OF IMPERIAL PALACES, CH'ANG AN	,,
MAP OF CHINA AND SUZERAIN STATES	,,

Preface

THE GENESIS OF THIS VOLUME SPRINGS FROM THE DESIRE TO translate further works of Tu Fu which grew upon Miss Lowell and me when, in 1921, we were putting *Fir-Flower Tablets*, our book of poems translated from the Chinese, through the press; this contained but fourteen stanzas from Tu Fu's brush. Therefore, when I returned to China in the autumn of that year, I selected several hundred of his poems and prepared the Chinese text in transliteration and translation, thus making it ready for the rendering – Miss Lowell's work. When my part was done, however, Miss Lowell was absorbed in her life of Keats and naturally could not be distracted at that moment. The Tu Fu poems were therefore laid aside until the Keats should be finished.

I have described the manner in which we accomplished our collaboration in an article, 'Amy Lowell and the Far East,' in the London *Bookman* for May, 1926; as it is relevant to this work, in that it shows how the method of translation I now use has been evolved, I quote it in part:

> . . . It must not be supposed for a moment, however, that Miss Lowell was content to work from my translations alone – by no means. We both realized that it was impossible for her to give an adequate rendering of a poet's thought unless she knew *exactly* the words in which he clothed it. So ideograph by ideograph, and line by line, we worked together; I translated and she made careful notes, and while so working Miss Lowell made a discovery which I believe will be far-reaching in its result. She found that frequently an analysis of an ideograph, rendered by a phrase instead of by a single word, made the meaning of a line far more vivid. The way the discovery came about was this: we were at work upon a poem, and I read aloud the character *mo*; 'it means "sunset,"' I said, and then added casually, 'the character shows the sun disappearing in the long grass at the edge of the horizon.' 'How do you mean?' asked Miss Lowell. 'Why, what I say,' I replied, and forthwith

showed her the character or pictogram in its ancient form, which shows plainly the sun sinking behind tufts of grass on the far-off horizon. She was more enthralled than ever, and insisted that I give her a long dissertation on the composition of characters, a subject that has always been of intense interest to me, but which I had *never thought of applying in translation.*

Although the Chinese have no alphabet, they build up their characters from a set of two hundred and fourteen chosen forms, which are pictograms or ideographs. Occidentals call these forms the 'radicals'; but Chinese refer to them as ideograph 'mothers' or 'origins.' One of these 'mothers' appears in every written character; and it is in the section headed by its 'mother' that a character must be looked up in a Chinese dictionary.

. . . Again a character often used to express the sound of a gale is composed of the wind radical and the figure meaning 'to speak'; Miss Lowell renders it in the phrase 'shouts on the clearness of a gale.'

Other examples might be given, but I have said enough to show that the aura of a Chinese character must often be sought in its make-up; and in our work Miss Lowell and I were very careful to investigate the ancestry of characters. . . .

As she says: 'I had in fact four different means of approach to a poem. The Chinese text (in transliteration) for rhyme-scheme and rhythm; the dictionary meanings of the words; the analyses of characters; and for the fourth, a careful paraphrase. . . .'

She found that the analyses of characters – that is the rendering of an ideograph by a phrase – had to be used very sparingly in poetry because, as she explains in a letter, it is so very easy to spoil the cadence. She writes: 'I could not get the "sun disappearing in the long grass at the edge of the horizon" either. Everything I did seemed to spoil the cadence. . . . Personally, since doing this work with you, I have become more in love with Chinese poetry than ever. I think it is extraordinarily good and immensely interesting to work with, but it would be *no good at all if you did it in free translation*; no good as an approach to the Oriental mind, that is.' Later, in discussing our collaboration, she said: 'The sinologues do not know enough about poetry to make adequate translations . . . and the poets who have done them best are more concerned in *making a name for themselves than in rendering the old Chinese people*. . . . The consequence is that you get one of two extremes – a scholarly translation which is poor poetry, or a splendid poem which no Chinese ever wrote. . . .'

To understand the last sentence it must be remembered that, generally speaking, translators of Chinese have avowedly been concerned with making a smooth rendering in the English idiom. They have deliberately rejected the Chinese idiom as being too bizarre and difficult to bring over.

Miss Lowell's fidelity was amazing. I often said, 'This line means so and so,' and her invariable reply was, 'Yes, but what does it *say*?' and then she would try to render the Chinese idiom, or employ the metaphor used, as nearly as might be, in a different language.

Our different functions were described metaphorically by my Chinese teacher in a characteristic conversation I had with him after he had perused the copy of *Fir-Flower Tablets* which I gave him. Mr. Nung Chu does not speak English, but he can read a little, and I asked him if he enjoyed the book. He replied: 'The writing-brush of Madam Ai's friend is full of life's movement.' 'Ah yes,' I said, 'and that, you see, is what Heaven does; anyone with patience and your help could do my part, but hers is a gift from Heaven.' 'Not wrong,' he assented, 'the words of Madam Ai are a little not wrong; but perhaps she has not heard a saying that we have in China: "What is the beauty of the peony flower without its green leaves?"' . . .

Miss Lowell and I had intended to publish a book devoted to the poems of Tu Fu, that grave poet whom the Chinese consider their greatest genius in the realm of poetry, and a paragraph in a letter which she wrote me during December, 1923, reads now in the light of a prophecy:

> 'How is Tu Fu coming along? I hope not too rapidly, for when I finish the Keats book I shall be so exhausted that I shall want quite a long vacation before I attempt anything else.'

The 'Keats book' of which she spoke was published in the early spring, 1925, and a few weeks later – on May the twelfth to be exact – Amy Lowell died.

* * *

The Tu Fu poems had been lying untouched these several years, waiting for the moment when Miss Lowell and I could work upon them together. Now all the plans which had been made in regard to their production must be revised: the book must be my own. I soon decided

upon the autobiographical form which I have followed. This entailed the translation of many more poems and the reading through of practically each one in the collection in search of details relevant to Tu Fu's life.

I realized too that to render Chinese poems in unrhymed cadence, as Amy Lowell had done, was not possible for me. After trying many experiments, always bearing in mind that the most important points to be considered were: What does the poet say? How does he say it? and, How can I make the text comprehensible? I found that I could give the answers to these questions best by abandoning all thought of writing conventional English and by concentrating on the attempt to bring over each ideograph and all that it implies in the context. In the interests of comprehension I have often been obliged to add the verb which is 'understood' in the terse Chinese text; on the other hand, I have refrained from adding the prepositions, articles, conjunctions and other parts of speech which the Chinese eliminate to a great extent, whenever it was possible to do so.

Chinese *lü shih*, or poems according to law, are composed of lines containing five or seven syllables each; in the irregular forms, such as the *hsing* and *ko*, which Tu Fu uses frequently, the syllables vary. (See glossary for definition of these forms, and Introduction to *Fir-Flower Tablets* for description of Chinese prosody.) In rendering I have scrupulously observed the number of ideographs in each line and have grouped the English words accordingly. It has been impossible to preserve the original order of these ideographic groups, but the lines are inviolate; and it will be observed that, with one or two exceptions, as in the *hsing* 'The Eight Immortals of the Wine-cup,' the lines run in pairs, which I have isolated.

I have also given, when practicable, the antithetical phrases so characteristic of Chinese style, but the beautiful form of Chinese poetry, its rhymes, its rhythm, and tones – those are untranslatable. There is nothing more delightful than to hear a Chinese scholar 'hum' poems, but the genius of our language forbids that even the ghost of this form, which has its genesis in the monosyllabic character of the Chinese, be brought over.

To return to this matter of 'all that the ideograph implies': being a composite form, it is seldom easy to translate an ideograph by *one* of our words. My teacher once said, when I was puzzling over the rendering of a character: 'Why do you try to find one word? It is made up of three.' I found indeed that a phrase was necessary to convey the whole meaning.

Take, for instance, the first line of 'Night Feast at Estate of the Tso Clan' in the chapter 'Two Years at the Eastern Capital': the text reads:

fêng wind
lin forest
hsien a silk woven with a white warp and a black weft
yüeh moon, or moonlight
lo drops.

I have rendered it: 'wind (weaves) (of) forest (shadows) (and) fallen moonlight (a pattern) white in warp and black in weft.' In the interest of comprehension I was obliged to add the words which would have been understood by a Chinese reader, and I felt that the beautiful figure Tu Fu uses to describe the moonlight should not be abbreviated.

The above line is concerned with giving the whole sense of a character as it appears in a Chinese-English

dictionary. I must now speak of those rare cases when I have analysed the character to obtain its overtones. Take a simple case – I quote from *The Chinese Mirror* – the character *nio* which means: to oppress, oppression, cruel, barbarities, etc., etc., is composed of 'tiger' and 'claws.' I translated it 'the tiger's claws of oppression,' and a critic objected, saying, 'The Chinese would not think of such an analysis in reading it.' Not consciously perhaps, any more than we think of the roots of words as we use them, but 'pure English' certainly results from using the word which has the aura demanded by the context. The following extract from the editorial of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, New York, September 22nd, 1928, expresses precisely what I mean:

> But it is excessively difficult to write pure English. 'Pure,' in this sense, as elsewhere, has a moral rather than a chemical significance, and implies responsibility for the full meaning of every English word. And what histories can be written of those meanings! The writer of pure English chooses his words with a consciousness of life in every syllable. It is not enough for him that a verb takes the accusative, or that 'admire' in a modern dictionary has one very simple meaning. He feels the Latin in his tongue, tastes the rough and concrete Norman or Anglo-Saxon of the monosyllables, knows that 'thrill' is a boring upon a bone, remembers the courtliness of courtesy, and in his choice of rhythms lets the sense be reflected in the sound. How else, with such a heritage, can his English be exigent of its own great powers?

Now take an educated Chinese: if he has studied the composition of characters – and who of the old school had not? – he sees and feels far more than we can imagine. I know from experience that Mr. Nung Chu never reads the character *chih*, to arrive, without seeing the bird dropping to earth therein depicted, and I doubt if the merest tyro could be blind to the 'tiger' and 'claws' shown in *nio*, oppression; just what he does see is difficult

for us to say, but we can be sure of one thing: in regarding the character *nio*, the learned Chinese does *not* see our Latin root *oppressum*; that is a purely arbitrary translation which does not give the reader of English any feeling whatever of the character. It is, I think, more a question of literature than of sinology. In actual translation, that is in determining the sense of a line, the make-up of a character cannot be taken into consideration, because through the ages its sense in context has been modified by use; but if, by analysing a character, the vividness of its accepted sense is intensified, this should, in my opinion, be considered in the rendering.

There is another and a very important point to be considered; I refer to the binominal terms, or as Bernhard Karlgren, the eminent Swedish philologist, calls them, 'synonym compounds': pairs of characters which, thus used, have acquired a very special sense, a sense which seems at first sight far from their individual meaning. In these binominal – sometimes trinominal – terms lies however the very kernel of the idiom which is the genius of the Chinese language, and they are in such frequent use that it has even been contended that the Chinese language is not strictly monosyllabic. Many of these terms are in my opinion more significant and vivid if rendered literally instead of merely in the accepted meaning of the compound. To take an example which might be multiplied indefinitely:

hsiao to eliminate, transpire,
hsi a full breath, a gasp, to breathe,

are frequently used in combination – *hsiao hsi*, meaning to transpire as news; a report, a rumour; or news from a person who is away. This term gives the idea of connec-

tion with the outer world as if by breath inhaled and exhaled; I think the rendering more truthful as well as more vivid if the idea be suggested – as 'the breath of news.' The mode of expression is surely a key to the mentality of a race, and it is the mutual comprehension of mentality which is of such vital importance in the world to-day. That the Chinese as a people take the composition of the character into consideration is, it seems to me, proven by the prevalence of innumerable games springing from analysis of the ideograph, and from the system of geomancy which may be said to be rooted in this analysis.

As I have already remarked, the Chinese use very few articles or prepositions in their poems, and they often 'take as read' parts of speech, such as nouns, pronouns and verbs which we must express; in fact, the translation of a Chinese poem resembles the de-coding of a modern cablegram.

ALLUSIONS. This matter of allusions is one that complicates the rendering of Chinese poems to an incredible degree. There is no essential difficulty in the translation of such: the commentaries are clear, voluminous and well documented; a Chinese scholar for whom the history of his country was an open book (I use the past tense advisedly) grasped at once allusive suggestion and admired the learning of the poet who could light-heartedly juggle with the past. It is however another matter to hold the attention of a Western reader from whom this historical background is hidden; to unveil the suggestions implied, entails a wearying series of commentary upon commentary. It is 'as easy as pointing to the palm of one's hand' to submerge a line of five characters in two

or three pages of explanations which carry back to the beginnings of time, even as computed by the Chinese.

My object in compiling this book is to reveal the personality of Tu Fu; I have therefore, rightly or wrongly, rent asunder and left at the side those veils of allusions which I feel can only serve to obscure this personality. I must, however, repeatedly insist that his skill in the use of allusion surpasses the norm, nor does it, to the Chinese reader, affect the vitality of his poems.

THE SPELLING OF CHINESE NAMES. I have, of course, except in the matter of place names, followed the 'Wade system,' upon which the dictionary in universal use – I mean that compiled by Professor H. A. Giles, of Cambridge – is prepared. This statement is not quite as simple as it looks: the question of place names is one of great difficulty for various reasons.

Firstly, the Chinese Post Office has adopted a different transliteration from that cited, and maps naturally follow the one chosen by them: *chou* is spelt *chow*; *ssŭ* is *sze*; *ch'uan* is *chwan*, and so on. It would seem quite simple to say that while using the Wade system for everything else, one used that of the Post Office for place names, thus making the spelling uniform with that of maps – not so, because

Secondly, maps, with a single exception, are out of date; even the Chinese Post Office is still using those prepared under the Manchu administration. The single map I refer to, which gives the names of places as they exist to-day, is *Philips' Commercial Map of China*, edited by Sir Alexander Hosie, M.A., LL.D., F.R.G.S. I quote his note on Place Names:

'Under the Republic the cities of China, hitherto divided into four classes, Fu, Ting, Chow and Hsien, were all officially made Hsien or "District Cities" and many of them were re-named. On the map these new names (now in general use) are given, the "Hsien" suffix being omitted for want of space. In the case of the ex-"Fu" cities, and a few well-known "Ting" and "Chow" cities, which are likely to retain their old names in popular use, these are given and the official names are added in brackets.'

On the maps in this book I have followed Sir Alexander Hosie's nomenclature, as all future maps will conform thereto; in the text the place names, generally speaking, are in the Wade transliteration – in Tu Fu's day the *chou* or prefectures existed and it continually refers to them. I have not been able to remain entirely consistent however in inconsistency! The names of Provinces and of places like Nanking and Peking are, out of consideration for my readers, spelt in accordance with the transliteration used on the present-day maps.

To turn now to the names of people, the Chinese mention the surname first and then the proper name, as: Tu, the name of the Clan, Fu, the individual name; a most practical method which we follow in our directories.

The Chinese method is, as usual, not as simple as it looks. The *ming* or personal name is often replaced by the *hao*, designation, or the *tzŭ* style, of which latter an individual may have several. My readers will find the matter treated under the term 'Names' in the glossary; here I would only call their attention to the point that when referring to people the Chinese often drop the surname and use the *hao* alone; instead of saying Yang Kuo-chung in full each time, they simply use 'Kuo-chung.' For the sake of brevity I have often followed this method.

Pronunciation, an important point especially because

the Chinese are so fond of onomatopœic words, is also treated in the glossary.

THE GLOSSARY. As nothing is more confusing to the eye than a multiplicity of footnotes, I have explained the Chinese terms and certain exotic expressions in a glossary, stretching the meaning of that word to its fullest extent.

THE BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX. It seemed highly desirable that certain data should be accessible regarding the individuals who lived their lives at the same time as did Tu Fu, and with whom he had intercourse; as it was obviously impossible to cut short the narrative and give the family history of each individual as mentioned, I have prepared this index from the books mentioned in the Bibliography.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS. At the turn of the last century there lived in China a certain Wu Yu-ju who delighted in illustrating all sorts of historical and legendary events. His works are highly popular with the Chinese, and although they may be regarded as more traditional than exact – some of the furniture shown being probably of much later date than that of T'ang – they will help my readers to visualize the surroundings in which Tu Fu lived. The dresses are typical of the period, as are the 'sitting-mats,' the low tables – still used in Japan where many manifestations of T'ang culture can be seen – the incense burners, the scrolls, the high wooden clogs, the wine cups, the rolled bamboo blinds and other details mentioned by Tu Fu in his poems. The line drawings in the text are from the brush of Wu Yu-ju.

The frontispiece is a photograph of the life-like

wooden figure of Tu Fu which sits in his ancestral temple in Ch'êng Tu, Szechwan. A student, whose name unfortunately I do not know, kindly took the picture for me at the request of my friend Dr. Stewart of the West China University in Chêngtu, and to him as well as to my unknown benefactor I here express my thanks.

The illustrations, apart from these line drawings, are duly acknowledged, and will, I hope, prove interesting to my readers.

THE TU SHIH CHING CH'ÜAN. Many editions of Tu Fu's works exist, but none lent themselves to my purpose as did this which is chronologically arranged. The portrait of Tu Fu included therein will appear in another volume. The Preface to the work, which gives its genesis, reads in part:

> The *Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan, The Mirror which Reflects the Knowledge and Estimates the Quality of Tu's Poems,* in twenty volumes, was compiled by the honourable Yang Hsi-ho, based on the notes and commentaries of all authorities. He raked out and arranged in order, dug up and selected from each, that he might examine into and discriminate among them all, to the end that whatever obscured the earnest devotion and loyalty of Tu the Master be disclosed and explained in verse and chapter. . . .
>
> I hummed over the poems and pondered in my heart for a long time.
>
> In the year Wu Ch'ên, in my unworthiness, I received Imperial Command to fill the post for a period as Governor of Liang Chuan.
>
> At my leisure I crossed to Grass Hut at the South of the city; I looked up to and raised both hands in reverence before the figure of the Master bequeathed to us. I was conscious of the high-minded thoughts that I had met in the poems one by one, flowing as water, blowing as on the wind.
>
> This year in Spring the engraving of blocks for the *Ssŭ Shih,* the *Four Histories,* which I had ordered, was completed. I reflected that since the ravaging and burning of soldiers in

the East-south [i.e. the T'ai P'ing Rebellion], the blocks for printing the collection of the Master's works had been caught in the blaze and had not been preserved; on this account I went about seeking good originals to deliver over for the engraving of characters; I added moreover the two volumes containing the essays and *fu* of the Master, with commentaries by the honourable Chang Shang-jo, to be published as a supplement.

Those who study these poems may thus end discussion of their perplexities, may grasp and look up to the brilliance of those flames which draw the gaze of men to their height of ten thousand times ten feet; may realize the sincerity of the Master's achievement, its depth, its weight and importance; and the excellence of the poems will overflow, shine brightly and be made known. The task finished, I took the book and stored it in the Grass Hut. . . .

In the Sixth Moon of the year Jên Shên, being the eleventh year of T'ung Chih (A.D. 1873), by Wu T'ang, styled Hsü I, Governor of Szechwan, wearing a button of the first rank.

The works of Tu Fu have received but scant attention from Western translators; a few poems appear in *Poésies de l'Epoque Thang* by Marquis d'Hervey-Saint-Denys; fourteen are in *Fir-Flower Tablets;* and that great translator of Chinese poetry, Dr. Ritter von Zach, has published a certain number in various German Journals; otherwise they have been practically untouched.

I have yet to thank my teacher, Mr. Nung Chu or Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos – a difficult task. His interest has been unflagging, his sympathy unfailing, and his patience inexhaustible.

In the darkest hours of discouragement, when I have seemed, to use a Chinese figure, tangled in a net of inadequacy, he has stimulated me to further effort. I can only express heartfelt gratitude.

SAUMAREZ PARK, GUERNSEY. *October 23rd*, 1928.

Introduction

THERE HAD BEEN A LIGHT FALL OF SNOW IN THE NIGHT, and when I came into my study, the morning sunshine, reflected from ten thousand snow-crystals, fairly dazzled my eyes: it flooded every corner of the room, and shining through the transparent yellow blossoms of the *la mei*, or last moon plum-flower, turned them to luminous gold. The courtyard trees beckoned me to step out through the pearl shell windows and rejoice in this foretaste of Spring; but Mr. Nung was waiting for me, a volume of the *Chiu T'ang Shu* or Old T'ang History in his hand, so I sank into my seat behind the long table serving us as a desk, and bent my head over the vibrant ideographs which convey so much more than their surface meaning. I began to read from the page Mr. Nung indicated:

'Tu Fu, his style Tzŭ Mei, the Man who Delights in Beauty, sprang from a clan rooted in Hsiang Yang, Hupeh Province. Later the abode was moved to Kung Hsien in Honan. His great-grandfather I I, Reliable and Skilled, held a post at Kung; his grandfather Shên-yen became an official –'

Mr. Nung stopped me for a moment. I laid down the slim volume and listened while he said quietly, 'We Chinese, in judging a man, think that it is of vital importance to look back at least three generations and examine what the education of the family has been. Tu Fu of course had an extraordinary inheritance of learning: his forebears had been scholars for eleven generations, while Shên-yen, his grandfather, was a distinguished poet as well as an archivist in the Imperial Academy.'

I murmured assent and, turning again to the Writing,

read: 'The father, Hsien, held an official post at Fêng T'ien.'

This, a District under the T'ang, no longer exists as such. It stretched to the South of the Capital, Ch'ang An or Eternal Peace, now called Sian, Western Peace. Within this District of Fêng T'ien, at Tu Ling, about sixteen miles South of the Capital, the Han Emperor Hsüan Ti lies buried. Tu Fu, to quote his Preface to the *fu* of the 'Western Peak,' says in the idiom of his race:

> He who prostrates himself before the Emperor has his roots in Tu Ling.

The 'roots' he refers to were struck, or in other words, he was born, during the opening year of Hsien T'ien, First Heaven, which according to our computation was A.D. 712.

This matter of year names must be grasped if any record of events connected with China is to be understood, and to avoid a long digression on my part, I would beg my readers to turn to the glossary, where they are described under the term *nien hao*.

Tu Fu, of whom the Chinese say, 'The history of the State can be read in his poems,' gives many intimate details in regard to his personal experience, and I have determined to reconstruct as far as possible his *Autobiography*, letting his poems tell his story. The task has been simplified by virtue of the fact that the *Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan*, the 'Mirror which Reflects the Knowledge and Estimates the Quality of Tu's Poems,' the edition I have used, has been carefully collated with historical texts and is arranged chronologically.

My own contribution will be a sketch of the events which form a background to Tu Fu's poems.

The Early Years of T'ang

The Early Years of T'ang

A.D. 618 SAW THE INAUGURATION OF THE T'ANG Dynasty. Li Shih-min, who later reigned as the great T'ai Tsung, placed his father on the throne and proceeded to bring order out of the chaos which prevailed within the Four Seas. So well did he succeed that, so runs the tale, criminals sentenced to death could be permitted to leave prison in order that they might assist at the autumn harvest, nor did they fail to return punctually to play the principal rôle in the winter executions! Could well-ordered government reach a higher point! In fact the very name T'ai Tsung has become a synonym for perfection of administration. Nor was his influence confined to the Flowery Central State. By degrees the Turki tribes of Central Asia came under his control and by A.D. 659 Kao Tsung, the successor of Li Shih-min, established suzerainty over the vast district controlled by the Tu Chüeh of the West, and the edicts of the Son of Heaven echoed to the shores of the Aral Sea.

Towards the end of the century, however, the weight of an irregular authority began to make itself felt, and upon the death of the then ruling Emperor, his consort, Wu Hou, deposed his successor and herself mounted the Dragon Throne.

Marvellous tales are told of the Empress Wu: tales of her cruelty, her arrogance and her power – qualities which did not decline with the passing years. She created nineteen different ideographs, now unused, one of which she adopted as her personal 'style.' It shows two eyes shining in the empty ether and suggests that she is to be compared with the two great lights of Heaven: the sun and the moon. In an attempt to spread the belief that her

powers were infinite, she issued commands that certain plants, which I may remark parenthetically had been carefully forced, should bloom immediately, even writing a characteristic quatrain to that effect:

WE DESPATCH A LEGATE TO ADVISE OUR SUBJECTS OF AN IMPERIAL PROGRESS IN THE ROYAL PARK.

To-morrow at bright dawn We shall stroll in the High Park;
With the speed of fire, issue this Proclamation that the Spring may know.

During the night flowers must bloom,
Nor may they await the stirring of the sunrise breeze.

For over twenty years she reigned in every sense of the word, but before descending to the Yellow Streams which lie the other side of death, she abdicated in favour of Chung Tsung, the weak ruler who had been deposed. This was in A.D. 705.

I do not think that this irregular interim, although ignored by Chinese historians who cite Chung Tsung as the Son of Heaven throughout its course, was without an influence on later events. Certainly the ethical balance, itself the chief strength of the governmental system, had been shaken, and during the next six years it was shaken even more severely. Wei Hou, the Consort of Chung Tsung, who was endowed with evil qualities in abundance but who lacked the energy and force of Wu Hou, tried to emulate that imperious lady, and had it not been for the courage and sincerity of Li Lung-chi, who later became Ming Huang, the Bright Emperor, the dynasty would most certainly have fallen.

Tu Fu, as I have said, was born in A.D. 712, the first year of Hsien T'ien. During the twelfth moon of the second year, Hsüan Tsung, to use Ming Huang's correct

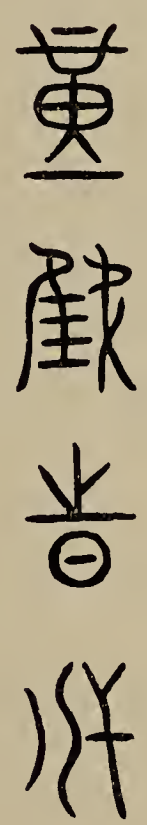
title, came to the throne and altered the *nien hao*: A.D. 713 thus saw K'ai Yüan, the Opening of Origins.

Had Ming Huang died in middle age, his name would be remembered with unqualified admiration. He accomplished a remarkable piece of work in restoring order where none had existed; his frugality became a byword and his choice of Ministers was impeccable. The early years of K'ai Yüan were as peaceful and prosperous as could be desired, and during these memorable days Tu Fu grew to manhood.

Childhood Time

K'AI YÜAN, FIRST TO FOURTEENTH YEARS.

A.D. 713–726



Childhood Time

K'AI YÜAN, FIRST TO FOURTEENTH YEARS.

A.D. 713–726

TU HSIEN, THE POET'S FATHER, NOT BEING HONOURED BY an entry in the biographies of the time, no data exist in regard to the movements of the family; but we do know that, at the age of four, Tu Fu found himself in the present-day city of Hsü, in Honan – that point on the Peking-Hankow railway which has lately been a storm centre of battle. While there, he saw a dancer who made an indelible impression on his childish mind. A poem, written many years later, reads in part:

I SEE THE PUPIL OF MISTRESS KUNG-SUN PERFORM THE POSTURING DANCE OF THE TWO-EDGED SWORD – A HSING

Vol. XVIII, Leaf 4

PREFACE

* * *

K'ai Yüan third year, I was a tiny child. Remember at Yen Ch'êng watching this member of the Kung-sun Clan perform the posturing dances of the 'Two-edged Sword' and the 'Tangled Sheep's Hair.' Ah! Wind blowing in gusts! Water dripping as rain! Floating up! Sweeping down!

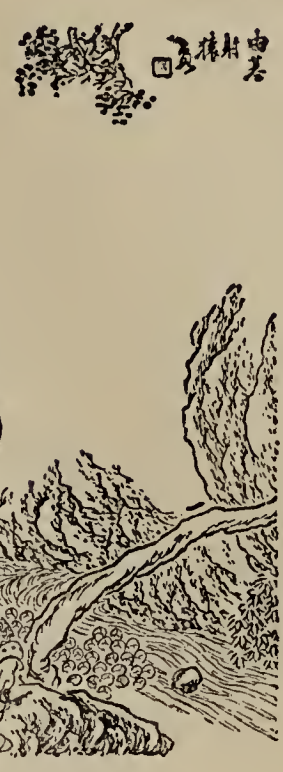
At that time she was pre-eminent, surpassing all those who appeared before the First and Highest, both from the schools in the inner precincts of the Pear-Blossom Garden and the Park of Spring Harmony, as well as the dancing maidens presented from without.

Before the Enlightened, the Learned, the Inspired, the Valiant Emperor, Kung-sun was supreme amongst all who knew this posturing dance: she stood alone.

* * *

At Yeh Hsien, Chang Hsü a man of Wu talented in transcribing 'grass' characters upon the

writing silk, several times tasted the joy of seeing Mistress Kung-sun posture the West of the Stream Two-edged Sword. From this his 'grass' characters, perfecting themselves slowly, became magnificent inspired. They now rouse the emotions. – So can Kung-sun be judged!



PRINCE I
[See Glossary]

POEM

* * *

On the four sides, all are stirred when she postures the 'Two-edged Sword.'

The rising hill of onlookers gaze in breathless suspense:
Her dancing would cause Heaven, Earth, to rise and fall.

Her scarf descends: it is the nine suns falling to the arrow of Prince I;
She rises: it is the soaring dragons, three abreast, driven by Ch'ün Ti.

She comes: it is the first clap of rolling thunder, causing a shudder of fear;
She ends: it is clear light on frozen river and sea.

* * *

Probably the scene did not differ in its essentials from similar scenes which take place within the walled cities of China to-day. A performer of sorts appears, and 'in the turning of one's palm,' there is a 'hill of onlookers.' Stolid country bumpkins gape, street urchins wriggle through the crowd and sober gentry hold up their brightly dressed children to have an unobstructed view. Tu Fu was probably a brightly dressed little boy with a knot of hair on either side of his shaven little head. That he was a precocious child we know from the evidence of his own writing-brush, as he cites the prowess of his early years in lines from 'Years of Strength Travel':

> Aged seven, I pondered only high matters,
> I opened mouth and chanted poem of silver-
> crested love-pheasant.
>
> Aged nine, I wrote large characters:
> There were enough to fill a hard-bottomed bag.

'Ah!' said Mr. Nung, as we read these lines, 'how different from an ordinary child! A *fêng huang*, a silver-crested love-pheasant! Yes, most children sing of dogs, of chickens: Tu Fu thinks of a fabulous creature. Here is great elevation of thought! And the *nang* – has Madam Ai seen the bags which the Japanese use for travelling? Those are what we call *nang*.'

Of course I have often seen and admired the long, narrow, hard-bottomed bags, gathered at the top through eyelet holes, but I did not realize that they were 'rooted' in the T'ang civilization which Japan transplanted from China in the sixth and seventh centuries of our era.

The allusion to 'large characters' I understand readily enough; in fact, the mere words bring to mind a vivid

picture first seen many years ago, and I see again an elderly Chinese gentleman dressed in a pale straw-coloured robe half hidden by his short coat of 'invisible' green. He sits before an oblong flowery-wood table upon which lie foot-square characters written by a precocious child of nine – according to our reckoning, eight. As I am no judge of calligraphy, the characters themselves failed to impress me, but the awestruck look on the face of my Chinese friend surprised me into a realization of something alien to my consciousness. He sat before these miraculous products of childish hands, oblivious of his surroundings.

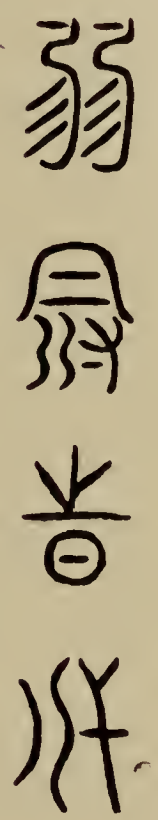
The sacrosanct nature of the Chinese written character

is difficult indeed for us to comprehend, but even to-day it is not uncommon to see men with little baskets on their backs, searching the streets for every scrap of paper which bears an ideograph, the scraps being then burned in furnaces provided for the purpose. The men are paid for this labour by some rich person who, in saving the written word from desecration, acquires merit.

Early Years Time

K'AI YÜAN, FOURTEENTH TO TWENTY-THIRD YEARS.

A.D. 726–735



Early Years Time

KA'I YÜAN, FOURTEENTH TO TWENTY-THIRD YEARS.

A.D. 726–735

'YEARS OF STRENGTH TRAVEL' GIVES NO FURTHER DETAILS of these very early days, but states:

Once, in time gone by, at age of ten and four or five,
I went out and travelled in feathered writing-brush, black ink stick realm.

Those scholars of the famous Ts'ui and Wei order
Treated me as though I resembled the precocious youths, Pan and Yang.

* * *

My nature was dominating, and I already appreciated spirits made from fermented grain;
Hating evil, I pressed closely to my heart thoughts of undeviating devotion to the Emperor.

I abandoned ways of childhood time companions,
And was tied in a knot of friendship with the old and hoary-headed.

Drinking until illuminated, I comprehended what lay at the eight extremities;
All ordinary matters became hazy, hazy.

When I came down from Ku Su Terrace in the East,
I had already arranged for a vessel to float on the sea;

And until now resentment lingers in my mind
That I did not succeed in exploring Fu Sang.

* * *

Maids of Yüeh are fairest under Heaven,
And Mirror Lake is cool in Fifth Moon!

Unusual, talented people assemble at Yen Stream;

* * *

There is no point more difficult to comprehend than the matter of 'drinking' among the Chinese, who are a notoriously sober people. They regard the controlled use

of spirits as one of the seven fine arts, and after the state of illumination, or *ts'ui*, mentioned by Tu Fu, is reached, no more wine should be taken.

The word *ts'ui*, as a rule incorrectly rendered by 'drunk,' has no equivalent in the English language, nor am I sure that the French *grisé* gives the exact nuance, although it is nearer the truth. The condition *ts'ui*, which brings inspiration but which can only last a few moments, is regarded by the Chinese as highly desirable, while anything more excessive is condemned. Fu Sang is described as the country where the sun rises and is probably Japan, while the Ku Su Terrace stood near the ancient city of Soochow. The foundations, laid in the fifth century B.C., can still be clearly traced, and probably when Tu Fu was there a dozen centuries ago, it was a fine pile.

Were I to quote the next twelve lines of the poem, I should be obliged, in order to make them comprehensible, to go into fascinating but irrelevant detail regarding history and legend connected with the states of Wu and Yüeh, existing before our era in the beautiful, fertile provinces known to-day as Kiangsu and Chêkiang.

Mr. Nung's comments on these youthful travels were most interesting. He heartily approved the idea of sending a boy of fourteen or fifteen on such a journey, and described the one he had himself taken at that age, his

only attendant a trusted member of his father's retinue. 'How else,' he asked, 'is a boy to know the history of his country?'

Tu Fu's enthusiasm is delightful. He evidently revelled in the romantic stories of early days and alludes to one after the other in a torrent of words. To have visited all the places he mentions he must have spent several years in floating on the rivers, lakes, canals and creeks of Central China – a most delightful proceeding! Finally, after a season of heat, he sailed past T'ien Mu Shan, the Hill of the Heavenly Dame, so-called because the impromptu songs of the lady have been heard ringing from its slopes, and made his way to the Ancestral Home of the Tu Clan in Kung Hsien near what has been known as the city of Honan, but which is now called by its old name Lo Yang, and was then the Eastern Capital.

At the Ancestral Home

K'AI YÜAN, TWENTY-THIRD YEAR. A.D. 735

Returning sail brushed Heaven's Dame Hill,
Within the year offered up precious service of my
learning in the trials at old home.

The *T'ang Shu Hsüan Chü Chih*, that is the Digest in the T'ang History dealing with the choice of good men for office, states that each *chou* and *hsien*, being each Prefecture and District, was provided under the T'ang with a *kuan* or Assembly Hall for the use of students; that each year during the second of the three winter moons, that is in the Eleventh Moon of the year, the official in charge selected, from among the body of students who had 'perfected' their studies by reading all the allotted books, the most brilliant. These men, called *hsiang kung*, country candidates, offered their services in the Shang Shu Shêng, an educational establishment connected with the Palace. After inspection in the Hu Pu, they reached the 'barrier of examination' before an official called the Yüan Wai Lang.

No great stretch of imagination is required to picture the enthusiastic welcome which must have awaited Tu Fu at the hands of his admiring relatives on his return, at the age of twenty-four, from this journey he describes. His reception by the scholars of the South must have been most gratifying to them, and it is not surprising that Tu Fu himself had formed a high estimate of his own powers.

My instinct to lay flat ramparts of learning erected
by the statesmen Ch'ü and Chia;
To my eyes low the wall of intelligence surrounding
the poets Ts'ao and Liu.

We know that he offered himself as a candidate for official training at his old home in Kung Hsien within the year, but exactly when Tu Fu went to the Capital is a matter of argument. Internal evidence, in a poem written many years later, suggests that before going to Ch'ang An he took a journey in what is now the province of Shansi, but if this be so, we have no details in regard to his itinerary; I have therefore not attempted to enter it upon the map.

Having, as he says in the Preface to the *fu* of the 'Great Rites,'

> 'trodden with independent steps through the luxuriant grass and tall forests of the Empire,'

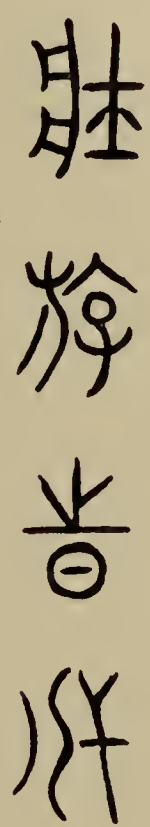
it was time for the young man to enter upon the career of an official; and there can have been no manner of doubt in Tu Fu's mind that such was to be his career. Did he not come of a line boasting eleven successive generations of scholars? Surely he had but to offer up his services and they would as surely be accepted. So, conscious of his literary descent, flattered by the recognition of the learned, and filled with exaltation born of the desire to prove himself worthy of service under an enlightened Son of Heaven, Tu Fu started triumphantly for the Capital. Alas for the frailty of human hopes! Alas for the afflatus which ignores the 'ramparts of learning' already erected! Tu Fu did not succeed:

> Perverse, wayward, I came down from ranks of those who had received rewards of merit at the examinations:
> Solitary, rejected, in Supervisor's Hall at Capital City.

Giving Way to Carousal Time

K'AI YÜAN, TWENTY-FOURTH YEAR, TO T'IEN PAO, FIFTH REVOLUTION.[1]

A.D. 736–746



[1] In the Fifth Moon of T'ien Pao, second year, it was decided to call each year a *ts'ai* or 'revolution of time.'

PART I

Years in Ch'i

K'AI YÜAN, TWENTY-FOURTH TO TWENTY-NINTH YEARS. A.D. 736–741

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REALIZE THE POINT OF VIEW UNIVERSAL in China until in 1905 an Imperial Edict swept away the age-old educational system, unless one also realizes the driving power of an ethical force which inspired the administration. Only one way of life was considered worthy as a career for a young man of intellectual ability. His sacred duty was to cultivate his natural talents in the hope that he might provide a worthy channel of intercourse between the Son of Heaven and the people of the one hundred surnames, even as the Son of Heaven provided a link of communication between this world and the Ruler of the Universe. It was a lofty ambition, treasured with passionate fervour, and in its ideal unblemished by thought of self. To serve, to advise and to regenerate, if regeneration were needed, such was the high desire of a Chinese youth; and to enter upon this way of life there was but a single road: the road which led from behind the Great Gates of the Examination Halls.

The incredible rebuff met with at Ch'ang An was too severe for Tu Fu, with his perverse and wayward nature, to endure patiently, nor are his mental processes difficult to follow. In bitter revulsion of feeling he became again a traveller, turning his steps for nearly a decade, as he describes in 'Years of Strength Travel,' to Shantung and Shansi, then known as Ch'i and Chao:

> Gave way to carousal in provinces of Ch'i and Chao;

Fur robes, horses; I simulated eccentricity, madness.

In Spring wrote poems upon Clustered Terrace
During winter hunted beside Blue-green Hillock

Called falcons in Dark Oak Forest;
Pursued wild beasts on Cloud Snow Ridge.

Arrows flew; bridle reins already thrown down;
Forearm extended; storks, cranes, dropped to earth.

With Su, the Marquis, gripping saddles, hilarious;
Suddenly it seemed that Marquis Su led by the hand one who resembled Ko The Strong.

His companion, Su Yüan-ming, who, as the commentators say, loved old poems, was the son of a man of position. Later he distinguished himself at the examinations, but although he and Tu Fu must have been exceptionally congenial, he is not mentioned again. Ko Ch'iang, or Ko The Strong, was a noted general of the Chin dynasty to whom Tu Fu compared himself when, in the arrogance of his health and strength, he and Su Yüan-ming visited historical sites in Shantung, which, could one but travel in that now famine-racked and bandit-ridden province, it would be possible to trace to-day.

Volume I of the *Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan* opens with poems written about K'ai Yüan, twenty-fifth year. The first of all describes a visit to the Dragon's Gate in Honan, not far from Tu Fu's ancestral home, to which he seems to have returned at intervals during these journeys in the

East. The poem, which appears in *Fir-Flower Tablets*, contains some lovely lines, but no further record remains of this sojourn in what is now Honan.

Tu Hsien, the poet's father, was at this time a minor official at Yen Chou, a city lying in the very heart of Confucius' country; it is, in fact, the station where one leaves the train to visit the birthplace of the Great Teacher. From the first line of the poem on the Yen Chou Gate, which is an allusion to an incident described in the *Lun Yü* when Confucius' son 'crossed the court,' one realizes that Tu Fu, as seems quite natural, although commentators argue the point at length, was visiting his

father. Standing on the Gate Tower he thinks of vanished States which formerly flourished here.

CLIMBING THE GATE TOWER AT YEN CHOU CITY

Vol. I, Leaf 1

In the Eastern Prefecture, during my 'crossing the Court' days,
From South Gate Tower for the first time I let fly my vision.

Floating clouds connect the Honourable Ancestor of Hills with the sea;
Level wastes stretch from Ch'ing to Hsü.

The stone tablet of Ch'in stands on the lonely hills;
The Palace Halls of Lu still endure in the desolate city.

Many age-old sounds ring in my heart; I listen and they come;
Undecided, in need of advice, I stand alone, looking anxiously to the far distance.

Sixty miles or so to the North rises T'ai Shan, the Lofty Mountain. From very, very early days this, the Peak of the East, has been a place of pilgrimage; it is probably the most popular of the Five Sacred Mountains, and the cult connected with its worship, which I have described in the *Chinese Mirror*, is very interesting indeed. Naturally Tu Fu climbed the precipitous steps leading to the summit, and presumably he recorded the fact in verse; all that has survived, however, from his writing-brush is:

GAZING FROM AFAR TO THE LOFTY MOUNTAIN

Vol. I, Leaf 1.

What then is the nature of Tai Tsung, Honourable Ancestor of all Mountains?
Seen from Ch'i in North, from Ch'u in South, its green colour does not fade away.

Invested at hour of formation and evolution with supernatural qualities,
Dividing northern shade from southern light, it cuts the darkness from the dawn.

Into cloud layers, rising from its scoured breast,
Fly birds returning to roost; my eyes open until the corners crack follow their flight.

I shall climb Nothing Beyond Peak,
Whence beheld, all hills are small.

East of Yen Chou rises the Stone Gate Mountain, and evidently Tu Fu spent a good deal of time here, probably staying in different monasteries. He visited a certain Chang, a person of consequence who was living in retirement on its slopes. Two poems deal with this friendship: one is written after the first meeting, but in the second, which I will not quote as it contains complicated and irrelevant allusions, Tu Fu expressly states that he has seen 'this Sage' very often. He says further that Chang serves him with pears, still very plentiful in Shantung, and an especially delicious wine which stimulated him to the extent of casting out all fear.

Before the hamlet hill path is dangerous;
Am always inebriated on returning home, have therefore no anxieties.

In addition to wine and fruit, Chang evidently gave the youth good advice, and talked to him about that official world from which he himself had retired, probably on a question of principle. There is no point more characteristic of the old administrative system than is this voluntary retirement on the part of men who disagree with some matter of policy which they consider vital; but evidently Chang urged Tu Fu to persist in his intention of entering, if it were possible, the service of the State, and not to think yet of becoming a hermit. The phrase used in the last line of the following poem, in regard to the 'phantom boat,' expresses the idea that one is doing something which is really impossible of accomplishment.

Tu Fu half believes that he has never failed in his examinations and that he is already a prospective official.

ON THE THEME OF CHANG: A PERSONAGE WHO LIVES IN RETIREMENT

Vol. I, Leaf 1

Spring hills; without companion, I come alone
to seek you;
chêng! chêng! trees are felled in the silence of
the heights.

It is very cold on the pathway by the stream:
I pass ice, snow,
And as sun rays slant, reach the wooded foothill
on Stone Gate Mountain.

You have no greed; you recognize at night the
aura of silver or of gold,
And remain far from its contamination where *mi*
deer wander past at dawn.

Darkness profound; the path to leave by hidden;
I glory in my privilege;
Here, with my Lord, can half believe I float in
the phantom boat of unreality.

Naturally but a modicum of these early poems remains. Tu Fu was unknown and unsuccessful; he was not yet hailed as 'Master,' the term of respect now used by commentators in lieu of his name; besides, many years of disorder when such records are easily lost, were to intervene.

The poems we have, however, bear witness to the cordial reception the young man, with his quick appreciation and his lively intelligence, received from the men

then living in Shantung. He describes attending their banquets, admiring their pictures, appraising their horses and taking excursions in their company. Nor did he accept their advances with humility: by no means. When Magistrate Hsü comes to call in the pouring rain – and presumably the Chinese of the T'ang dynasty disliked rain as much as do their descendants of to-day – Tu Fu was not one whit impressed. In fact he remembers that the poverty-stricken but brilliant youth, Ch'ên P'ing of the Chin dynasty, who could only afford a mat as a doorway, yet heard the chariots of high officials draw up before this humble portal – and straightway draws a mental comparison between himself and Ch'ên P'ing.

IN TIME OF RAIN, WRITING MY THOUGHTS: ASSISTANT DEPUTY MAGISTRATE HSÜ ARRIVES ON A HORSE

Vol. I, Leaf 2

Above Eastern Peak tower cloud-pinnacles;
They rise, float, overflow the great emptiness.

Thunder crashes; swallows on the rolled screens flutter, startled;
Rain drives; fish in the river sink deep.

I sit, white wine of Worthy Men before me;
I hear at my door chariot of high Official.

'Enter, Sir, I am conscience-stricken that there be mud and slush;
'Pray ride your horse to portico steps!'

AT A BANQUET ON STONE GATE MOUNTAIN TOGETHER WITH LIU NINE, THE FA TS'AO, AND CHÊNG, OFFICIAL OF HSIA CHIN

Vol. I, Leaf 2

Autumn water clear; its depth unfathomed;
Hearts of guests purified; all annoyance stilled.

Assistant-officials, Liu and Chêng, seize opportunity of boundless joy;
Riding horses, reach wild forest.

The High Ministers have received pendant badges of rank;
Value of the flowery banquet, sixty ounces of gold.

Dusk comes; tenuous the sound of flutes,
And as from deep waters rises the dragon chant.

VISITING THE SOUTHERN MOAT AT JÊN CH'ÊNG WITH MAGISTRATE HSÜ; WRITTEN THE NIGHT BEFORE THE SEASON OF WHITE DEW

Vol. I, Leaf 2

Runnels, channels, are filled with autumn water;
Little boat rounds angle of the city wall.

Sun gone, chilly; see men washing horses;
Leaves thick on trees; confused clamour of cicadas.

Water chestnuts red-ripe; time of rains past;
Plumed rushes over waste ground; Eighth Moon sky.

At dawn, when sun rises from sea mist, white dew will fall;
Far away; think in my heart of old green felt rug on floor of my home.

THE MONGOL HORSE OF THE OFFICIAL FANG

Vol. I, Leaf 2

Mongol horses from Ta Yüan are famous:
Lean, sharp, angular, their frame is perfect.

Two ears pointed like sliced bamboo,
Four hoofs fleet on the wind.

Before them no space too wide:
Verily they may be trusted to save from death, to guard life.

Fiery, spirited, is their nature,
Ten thousand *li* they cover at a stretch.

THE PAINTING OF A FALCON

Vol. I, Leaf 3

White as pure frost, it rises on the wind;
The painting of the hoary falcon is superb.

With body stretched, thinking of the crafty hare,
Its piercing eye looks sideways – it is like an angry Hu.

The copper foot-band shines bright: I seem able to grasp it in my hand.
There is the bird by the column of the porch, I can almost call it hither.

Why should it strike all other birds,
And sprinkle the level grass with their feathers and their blood?

In writing of Chi, the *shang jên* or Higher Man, a term used throughout T'ang poetry for a Buddhist priest, Tu Fu's reverence is very different from his tone when referring to a minor official! Hsü Hsün and Chih Tun were both men of the Chin dynasty to whom Tu Fu compares himself and Chi. Hsü Hsün loved scenery and was able to find suitable replies to the questions asked by his friend Chih Tun. Tu Fu, although he too loves scenery, feels discouraged, inadequate before the gentle Higher Man, and is loth to disgrace his prototype Hsü Hsün.

THE GRASS STUDY OF CHI, THE BUDDHIST PRIEST, A HIGHER MAN

Below the thatch of Chi the Master's hut,
I can receive from Heaven fresh poems.

My pillow and fine bamboo sleeping-mat are in the quiet forest;
Tea and melon fruit delay the guest until the hour is late.

River lotus wave white fans,
Heaven thorns coil green threads.

It is futile! I disgrace the class of Hsü Hsün,
And find it difficult to requite the words of Chih Tun.

PART II

Two Years in Eastern Capital

K'AI YÜAN, TWENTY-NINTH YEAR, AND EARLY T'IEN PAO. A.D. 741–746

According to the Digest of Years contained in the *Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan*, Tu Fu visited Lo Yang during K'ai Yüan, twenty-ninth year, and on Mount Shou Yang offered sacrifice to a far-off ancestor at the Season of Cold Food. On this same mountain he visited the ruins of a farmstead which had belonged to a well-known poet, Tsung Chih-wên, a friend of Tu Fu's grandfather. The poem he wrote on this occasion is of but slender interest, although Tsung Chih-wên had a notable career, and had been present when the imperious Empress Wu commanded her courtiers to organize a poetic competition. A certain Tung-fang Ch'iu was the first to complete his poem, and was rewarded with a robe embroidered by the Palace ladies. When however Tsung Chih-wên offered up his work, the Empress was so delighted that she seized the robe and bestowed it upon him. Specimens of his poetry have been treasured, but the farmstead was in ruins as early as A.D. 741.

VISITING THE OLD FARMSTEAD OF TSUNG CHIH-WÊN THE YÜAN WAI

Vol. I, Leaf 3

The old pools and cottages of my Lord Tsung
Are deserted, ruined, on Shou Yang Ridge.

A lonely winding path leads to the entrance;
On some other day I will come to chant poems.

* * *

During the First Moon of the next year the *nien hao*, or year-title, was altered from K'ai Yüan, Opening of Origins, to T'ien Pao, Heaven's Treasure. Tu Fu, still in Lo Yang, wrote a grave piece for his father's sister, the wife of an official,who died in the Eastern Capital, but whose coffin was moved during the Sixth Moon to Honan Hsien.

These grave pieces, which are preserved among Tu Fu's essays, seem to have been highly approved; in T'ien Pao, third revolution, he writes another for his grandmother, also the wife of an official, who died in her private house near the present Kai Fêng but who was buried near Lo Yang in the Eighth Moon; and through still another grave piece he made the acquaintance of an Imperial son-in-law – but that is not yet.

Meanwhile Tu Fu visited various members of his family and, although no mention is made of so commonplace a fact, his marriage was probably consummated. The wife, of whom her husband later on gives many affectionate details, was a lady of the Ts'ui Clan. He attended, too, the festivities of an ever-widening circle of friends, remembering gratefully the happy journeys in Wu. The Chinese consider a title fully as important as a poem, and in the following example the explanatory heading is longer than the poem itself.

EARLY IN THE T'IEN PAO PERIOD, MY MATERNAL UNCLE, A JUDGE IN THE COURT AT THE CAPITAL, CAME TO THE HALL OF MY GRANDFATHER'S SECOND WIFE. HE PILED A BASKETFUL OF EARTH IN FRONT OF THE HALL AND MADE A HILLOCK MORE THAN A FOOT HIGH, TO USE AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE WOODEN STAND OF THE INCENSE-BURNER WHICH HAD DECAYED. HE PLACED THEREON A POTTERY BOWL WITH LIGHTED INCENSE STICKS. THE BOWL STOOD FIRMLY. BY ITS SIDE HE PLANTED TZ'Ŭ BAMBOOS WITH MANY SHOOTS. THE SEVERAL PEAKS OF THE LITTLE HILL WERE SHARP AND ISOLATED, THE BAMBOOS SWAYED GRACEFULLY, THERE WAS A 'BEYOND THE WORLD'S DUST' FEELING WHICH I TRIED TO ANALYSE. NOT REALIZING WHENCE CAME INSPIRATION, I MADE THIS POEM

Vol. I, Leaf 4

He piled a basketful of earth exceeding a foot in height,
And made three peaks: his thoughts transcend the mean.

Seeing them, I fancy myself in a wild,
A solitary place, whence even now clouds rise.

Among the T'zŭ bamboos darkness of Spring night gives way,
And glowing incense fades at coming of pale dawn.

May longevity as of the Southern Mountain be your reward,
As day by day the life-giving aura yields the breath whence spring all sentient things.

NIGHT FEAST AT ESTATE OF THE TSO CLAN

Vol. I, Leaf 3

Wind weaves, of forest shadows and fallen moonlight, a pattern, white in warp and black in weft;
Dew purifies our robes; we stretch the strings of psalteries.

Dark water flows beside flower-edged footpath,
Spring stars girdle the Grass Hut.

Compose writings; candle burns short;
Utter rapier-words; wine-cups pass often.

Poem ended; hearing a chant of Wu
I think of little boat: I do not forget!

One of Tu Fu's younger brothers had already entered official life and was at this time in Lin I, not far from the present-day Tsinan. He writes to his family about one of the all too frequent Yellow River floods which have punctuated the history of China. Nor would he be a

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true son of the Tu Clan did he not indulge in literary allusion. Sea turtles and water lizards had formed a bridge for King Mu of the Chou dynasty in the days when China was young; and the magpies, birds of happiness, as every child in China knows, join their wings and span the Silver River, which we call the Milky Way, in order to render possible the annual meeting of the Weaving Maiden and the Herd Boy – but he, minor official at Lin I, could obtain help from no one!

I have not quoted the last four lines of Tu Fu's reply: they are designed to comfort and encourage his brother, but do so by means of such complicated allusions as to be unintelligible without endless commentaries.

Vol. I, Leaf 3

The two great powers, Heaven, Earth, gather wind, rain;
Waves, billows, engulf a hundred valleys.

I hear it said, vast Stream has cracked,
Will unite far off with high cold sea of the Immortals.

Officer in charge is disheartened, downcast, downcast;
Throughout the province sound of indignant voices wailing, *ao! ao!*

Younger brother perched in minor position at Lin I;
Is charged with supervision of officers who report on stream defences.

Day before yesterday, his foot-length of writing arrived (saying):
'No time to undertake setting up of planks, ramming down of walls.

'To borrow strength of great sea turtle and long water lizard, is difficult;
'To look for feathers of black bird of happiness is futile.'

In South Yen, wind whistles, water fills ditches between growing crops;
Above Chi River wild chrysanthemums, aromatic herbs, are all submerged.

Snails and mussels are washed up, invade precincts of the town;
Dragons of morasses, dragons whose horns have not yet grown, rise from the nine deep hollows.

Hsü Kuan Pass is sunk deep as the Water Prefecture where rules the Dragon King;
Chieh Shih Mountain has become small as an autumn hair.

A single tree remains beside the reed hut thatched with grass;
Bright Heaven will lack the flotilla of ten thousand tribute-bearing junks.

* * *

PART III

Friendship with Li Yung and Li T'ai-po

Just when Tu Fu first met his great contemporary Li T'ai-po, who was a decade older than himself, is not clear; but we know that during the Third Moon of T'ien Pao third revolution, A.D. 744, Li T'ai-po, having fallen out of favour at Court, left the Capital and wandered from one District to another; we also know that he visited Liang and Sung, the present Kai Fêng and Kuei Tê in Honan, and it is reasonable to assume from internal evidence, as do the commentators of the *Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan*, that he, Kao Shih and Tu Fu at this time ascended together the famous Ch'ui T'ai, a terrace in Honan. Here the three poets 'drank wine, sang songs in a mournful key and thought of ancient days.' Tu Fu, now thirty-three, responded with enthusiasm to Li T'ai-po's advances and eventually proceeded to Ch'i with him. Before leaving, however, Tu Fu presents a poem in which he refers to a dish supposed to be eaten by Immortals and to ensure longevity. This dish is made, according to the *Tz'ŭ Yüan*, of rice dried in the sun after having been steeped in juice pressed from the leaves of the *nandina domestica*, which the Chinese call *t'ien chu* or heavenly bamboo.

LI T'AI-PO
[See Glossary]

Vol. I, Leaf 4

Two years a visitor at East Capital;
I detest as in the past the crafty, the unscrupulous.

I, a man with a hermit's heart, scent the evil odour of wrong-doers;
I eat coarse greens for food and am often not satisfied.

I lack, however, a meal of selected rice steeped in green juice,
Which would bring colour of health to my cheek.

It is mortifying! I am at the moment in want of money to buy medicinal herbs,
And in hill forest all trace of such seems brushed away.

Lord Li, great scholar of Golden Register,
Is hiding his person and studying lore of solitude.

He also wanders in precincts of Liang and Sung,
Seeking an opportunity to gather jasper-green plants.

Ch'i, as I have already said, approximates to the present-day Shantung, and, near Chi Nan, the city called Tsinan on the maps of to-day, Tu Fu met an

important personage, a certain Li Yung, often styled Li Po-hai. The manner of their meeting was delightful. Li Yung, whose high rank entitled him to drive in a chariot with a black hood and scarlet curtains, paid the younger man the signal honour of asking for an introduction, and invited Tu Fu to attend a banquet at Li Hsia where Li T'ai-po and Kao Shih were also present. This was T'ien Pao, fourth revolution, A.D. 745.

ACCOMPANYING LI PO-HAI TO A FEAST AT LI HSIA PAVILION

Vol. I, Leaf 5

Black chariot hood halts on Eastern Border
Near north islet at opening of Ch'ing Stream;

To right of lake this old pavilion;
In Chi Nan many famous scholars.

Among the misty hills I already feel elated;
Here are jade girdle ornaments and songs of singing girls.

Among towering bamboos we do not feel the heat,
In these open spaces streams, rushing, rippling, cross one another.

All who are assembled verily rejoice;
At setting of the sun – then, how will it be?

High and honourable, low and insignificant, all living things must serve;
This group of nobles would with difficulty pass here again.

The next poem in the collection describes an expedition they made together to a pavilion in the same vicinity, and is followed by Li Yung's reply. This pavilion was newly built by Li Chih-fang, a Yüan Wai who was related to Li Yung and who was a talented man of letters. Tu Fu kept in touch with him for many years.

Shortly afterwards, Tu Fu went to Lin I to see the brother who had written about the flood, and on his way thither passed this pavilion. He was reminded, of course, of Li Chih-fang, then absent at Ch'ing Kuan, and refers to him as the Lord of Poetry.

GOING TEMPORARILY TO LIN I; PASSING THE PAVILION AT CHAI SHAN LAKE; OFFERING UP THOUGHTS TO LI THE YÜAN WAI; INSPIRATION OVERWHELMS ME

Vol. I, Leaf 6

Lake waters border pavilion in the wilds;
I halt my horse among tall forest trees.

Water lizards seem to roar through wind and pounding waves;
Fish leap; the sun has passed its zenith and blazes on the hills.

For a short time I am a traveller, I grieve for the Lord of Poetry,
And gaze towards Ch'ing Kuan, the Green Pass.

Exquisite, exquisite, rising mist and clouds;
If I could but urge your chariot to return!

Li T'ai-po was also at Tsinan and visited mountains, rivers and lakes with Tu Fu. In a poem on the Stone Gate Road, Li Po says: 'We have climbed everywhere, to every pool and ledge.' The affection between the two men was deep; it withstood the passage of time and survived plain speaking on both their parts. In the poem written at this time 'Sent to Li Po as a Gift,' which appears in *Fir-Flower Tablets*, Tu Fu does not hesitate to criticize his friend for 'passing his days in emptiness,' although his 'nature is a spreading fire.' The two men went together to visit a certain Fan who lived in retirement. Li T'ai-po had been there once before and had lost his way. Although the poem which describes this occurrence does not refer to the time when Tu Fu

accompanied him, I have not been able to resist the temptation of quoting it:

SEEKING, NORTH OF LU CITY, FAN THE RETIRED SCHOLAR; MISSING THE WAY, AND FALLING OFF MY HORSE AMONG THE BURWEED; WRITTEN WHEN I SEE FAN PUT DOWN HIS WINE AND PULL OFF THE BURRS

by Li T'ai-po

Far off in autumn clearness wild geese fly over;
The day is still in season of no clouds.

My traveller's heart is neither settled nor decided;
Many things fill it with vague unrest; am on point of doing what?

Suddenly remember Fan, the man in the wilds,
And his fenced-in garden where he cultivates the beauty of solitude.

It is surprising what transcending afflatus rises within me;
I hurry, fearing only that I may come late.

At the moat by the city wall I miss the road
And turn my horse's head to the steep uncultivated ridge.

No pity for my kingfisher-blue cloud robe,
To which green burrs stick insultingly.

I enter the gate; all give a laugh;
Seizing my forearm, my Lord asks what has happened.

Guests drink wine, delight in autumn vegetables,
In delicious frosted pears served in the hills!

At this banquet we do not put down our chopsticks;
Before this sitting-mat I forget my morning hunger.

Bitter dates hanging in North suburb!
Cold melons coiling on East fence!

Throwing back my head, I drink four, five, cups of wine,
And hum my own song of the Fierce Tiger.

I almost experience the joys of ten whole days
In such an opportunity, which occurs seldom in a thousand years.

Our winnowed words fly freely on the wind;
We jest extravagantly and follow every impulse.

When intoxication comes, I mount my horse and go,
Smiling as I think of Kao Yang Pool.

Tu Fu does not enter into much detail in regard to the visit he and Li Po made together, and I have omitted the last four lines of his poem as being too esoteric for Occidental comprehension.

Mr. Nung was most interesting about the allusion to the little serving-boy, which cannot be appreciated without a realization of the Chinese belief in 'original virtue,' as opposed to the doctrine of 'original sin,' which latter idea seems to them fantastic. The Three Character Classic, foundation of the indigenous educational system, opens with the following lines (I use Professor Giles' translation):

'Men at their birth are naturally good.
'Their natures are much the same; their habits become widely different.
'If foolishly there is no teaching, the nature will deteriorate.
'The right way in teaching is to attach the utmost importance to thoroughness.'

* * *

This being so, it is important, as Mr. Nung pointed out, that a child be trained in the highest principles and moulded by the most refined example. 'Scholars,' so he said, 'take little serving-boys with them when they retire to the hills and teach them only those things which a wise man should know, therefore their hearts are quite pure; they are unsullied by the world and have only the example of a scholar to follow.'

The three characters in line eleven – *wên*, to hear; *han*, cold; *ch'u*, a baton – which in translation I have been

obliged to expand – are often used in conjunction and convey, to the Chinese reader, a perfectly definite autumnal picture: the picture of women by a stream, in their hands batons rather like those our policemen use, and, folded on stones before them, thick cotton clothing which, in preparation for winter use, they beat and rinse, rinse and beat again.

WITH LI TWELVE, NAMED PO, SEEKING FAN TEN WHO LIVES IN RETIREMENT

Vol. I, Leaf 6

Marquis Li writes beautiful phrases –
Beautiful, beautiful, resembling those of Yin K'êng.

We are both travellers on Tung Mêng Hill;
I love my Lord as younger brother loves elder brother.

In autumn, exhilarated by wine, we sleep under a single quilt;
Hand in hand, we daily walk together.

Suddenly we remember our appointment in an isolated place,
And returning seek him who lives in the North Suburb.

We enter his gate; high inspiration kindles;
There waits respectfully the innocent little serving-boy.

Hear pounding of cold-weather garments beaten and rinsed, it is sunset hour;
Clouds collect before ancient city wall.

As we are discussing the friendship between Li T'ai-po and Tu Fu, I will quote a little poem which Li Po 'wrote in jest,' although strictly speaking I think it was written a few years later. Li Po mentions the quaint conical straw hat which the Master affected, and which has come to be associated with his personality. He is shown wearing it in the frieze over the Great Gate of my Grass Hut by the Yellow Reach, and we had no difficulty in making the workmen, who executed the decoration, understand what was wanted. Li T'ai-po is shown with Tu Fu and naturally wears the cap of a scholar. The two poets are engaged in a game of hedged-in-checkers; mountains, pine-trees and plum-blossoms are suggested in the background, while in the foreground little serving-boys are busily boiling tea and warming wine by way of refreshment.

SENT IN JEST TO TU FU

by Li T'ai-po

On the peak of Fan K'o Hill I meet Tu Fu;
He wears a conical straw hat upon his head; the sun has reached its zenith.

'Pray, may I remark, since we last parted, you have become very thin;
'Of course, since then, you have undergone the bitterness of writing poems.'

The period is epitomized in a long poem written many years later. I quote the opening lines:

FORMER TRAVELS

Vol. XIV, Leaf 17

Long ago, accompanied by Kao and Li,
I climbed Shan Fu Terrace at dusk,

Withered grass clustered at edge of stone tablet:
it was cold;
Wind, clouds, swept from ten thousand *li*.

Leaves from mulberry and Chê trees fell like
rain;
Flying weeds drifted back and forth in the air.

Frost; in wide marsh pure white ice;
Birds, beasts, more to be pitied than ever.

* * *

At that time Government granaries were filled;
Domain of World was open, people penetrated
everywhere.

Strong soldiers thought Hu Barbarians anni-
hilated;
Commanding General was revered as were the
Three Chief Ministers of State.

Princely Ruler lacked anything to grieve over;
Chariot of Government was driven by heroes and
scholars of quickening talent.

Tu Fu gives us no further data in regard to the period in Ch'i. Days, weeks and months passed by. Doubtless all the friends who admired and appreciated his talent urged that he should return to the Capital, and probably it was through one of these friends that, during this year, he was invited to write the grave-piece or, strictly speaking, the inscription for the Spirit Path Tablet of an Imperial Concubine of the Huang-pu Clan. He must, too, have felt that he had no right to accept one rebuff as final, that his duty lay clearly in the direction of service to the State; at all events, the fourth or fifth revolution of

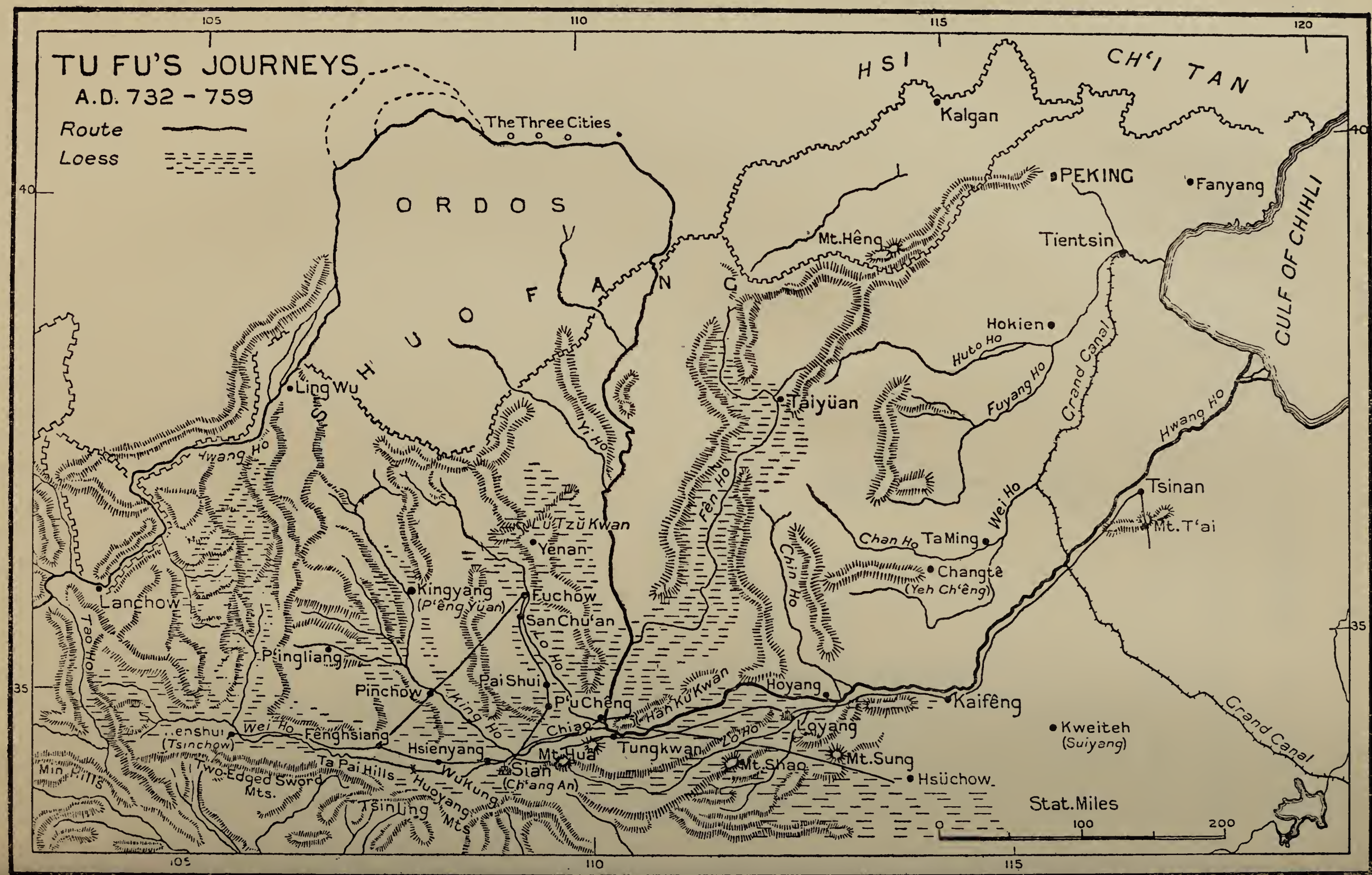
T'ien Pao saw his return to the Capital. He notes the fact in 'Years of Strength Travel':

> Joyful thoughts of eight, nine, years;
> Returned West, reached Hsien Yang, City of Assembled Brilliance.

Middle Life Time

T'IEN PAO, FIFTH TO FIFTEENTH REVOLUTIONS.

A.D. 746–756


TU FU'S JOURNEYS
A.D. 732 - 759
Route
Loess
105
110
115
120
40
35
HSI
CH'I TAN
The Three Cities
Kalgan
PEKING
Fanyang
ORDOS
Mt. Hêng
Tientsin
GULF OF CHIHLI
Hokien
Huto Ho
Grand Canal
Fuyang Ho
Ling Wu
Taiyüan
Hwang Ho
Yi Ho
Fên Ho
Wei Ho
Tsinan
Mt. T'ai
Lu Tzŭ Kwan
Yenan
Chan Ho
Ta Ming
Changtê
(Yeh Ch'êng)
Chin Ho
Lanchow
Kingyang
(P'êng Yüan)
Fuchow
San Chu'an
Lo Ho
Tao Ho
P'ingliang
Pai Shui
Pinchow
P'u Chêng
Hoyang
Kaifêng
Han Ku Kwan
Chiao
Loyang
Kweiteh
(Suiyang)
Wei Ho
Fênghsiang
Hsienyang
Mt. Hua
Tungkwan
Mt. Sung
Mt. Shao
Hsüchow
Sian
(Ch'ang An)
Ta Pai Hills
Two-Edged Sword Mts.
Min Hills
Tsinling
Huoyang Mts
Wukung
Stat. Miles
0
100
200

PART I

Return to the Capital

T'IEN PAO, FIFTH REVOLUTION. A.D. 746

WHETHER TU FU PASSED ALONG THE GREAT ARTERY OF travel which leads through T'ung Kuan in the autumn of T'ien Pao, fourth revolution, when ripe persimmons hang scarlet in the trees, or whether it was spring of the fifth revolution, when foot-hills are a soft haze of plum-blossoms, cannot be determined. No record of the journey remains, but he certainly approached the towering gateway of Ch'ang An before the hot weather, as the first poem referring to this period describes a banquet he attended during the summer. The host upon this occasion was Chêng Ch'ien-yao, the nephew of Chêng Ch'ien with whom Tu Fu soon became intimate and to whom he often refers. Ch'ien-yao was an Imperial son-in-law, and Ming Huang, when he handed down in marriage his daughter, the Lady Lin Chin, bestowed upon her and her husband a great mansion, called by the Chinese a *chia ti*, and here Tu Fu stayed. Lady Lin Chin's mother was the Imperial Concubine for whose grave Tu Fu had written an inscription the year before.

A FEAST IN THE HEART OF LOTUS-FLOWER GROTTO AT THE ABODE OF THE IMPERIAL SON-IN-LAW CHÊNG

Vol. I, Leaf 6

Host's dwelling dark grotto; fine mist, vapour;
Guest tarries; summer bamboo mat is pale green,
the colour of branching coral.

Spring wine in cup is potent, transparent as veined amber;
Iced syrup in green jade bowl, cold as streaked agate.

Deceived, we fancy ourselves at thatched hut in copse beyond river,
Or already upon windy ledge, in haze where clouds are born.

It is true! the belvedere of Ch'in is conquered by Chêng's valley;
At times we hear many-coloured girdle pendants: they ring *shan! shan!*

Such occasions were delightful, and Tu Fu revelled in the meetings with cultivated men. In 'Years of Strength Travel' he says:

Felt longing to be with actual noblemen of literature;
Took pleasure in wandering about with him who is a talented Prince;
Dragging each other by our robes, we settled down in places where sweet wine made over night was sold.

The 'talented Prince' was Li Chin, the Emperor's nephew, eldest son of Ming Huang's elder brother who, because he refused the high office of Son of Heaven, is known as Jang Huang Ti, the Emperor Who Waived His Rights. Li Chin, whose talent in drinking surpassed the norm, was created Prince of Ju-yang, but called him-

self 'Prince Ferment, President of the Board of Barm,' and formed, with seven other noted men, a coterie styling themselves the 'Eight Immortals of the Wine Cup.' Tu Fu found the Prince, whose literary appreciation was keen, a congenial companion, and the Prince accepted a long poem full of polite phrases and literary references which Tu Fu wrote in his honour.

Whether or not the Eight Immortals of the Wine Cup were actually in Ch'ang An at the self-same moment, is a matter of speculation, but Tu Fu has characterized them in a well-known poem, connecting with the name of each individual some familiar anecdote. Chang Hsü was the noted calligraphist who was so deeply impressed by seeing the Lady Kung-sun perform the posturing dance of the 'Two-Edged Sword,' and for details in regard to the other 'Immortals,' I refer my reader to the glossary.

THE EIGHT IMMORTALS OF THE WINE CUP — A SONG

Vol. I, Leaf 7

Chih-chang, astride a horse, seems on board a boat;
Giddy, eyes dim, he drops into a well and sleeps under water.

Prince Ju-yang drinks three measures, then starts for an audience before Heaven;
On the road he meets a cart of barm: from his mouth trickles the saliva;
He feels annoyed that he is not transferred to govern beside the Wine Springs.

High Adviser of the Left day after day wastes ten thousand pieces;
He drinks like a long whale, sucking in the one hundred streams;
When holding a wine-cup to his lips, he says, 'I rejoice in clear wine of Enlightened Men; I fly moreover from thick draught of Virtuous Worthies.'

Tsung-chih in beauty of his early years is distinguished and exceedingly refined;
Grasping wine goblet, he turns up his bright eyes towards blue empyrean;
His skin is white as tree of jade which bends before the wind.

Su Chin sits for ages in abstraction before Maitreya Buddha;
When in his cups, gone, gone, is this desire; he flies from meditation.

Li Po after one measure produces one hundred poems;
He sleeps in a wine shop at Ch'ang An market-place;
The Son of Heaven summons him to the Presence; he does not board the boat;
He styles himself 'Official who is an Immortal of Wine.'

Chang Hsü, after three cups, writes inspired characters;
Throws off his cap, appears bare-headed before the Prince and high officials;

Strokes of his long-haired writing brush drop on the paper like clouds or driving mist.

At five measures, Chiao Sui becomes extremely eloquent,
Talks learnedly, argues vigorously, startles all who sit on the four sides of the feast.

The last night of T'ien Pao, fifth revolution, sees Tu Fu at an inn in Hsien Yang, originally a part of the Capital, 'passing over the year.' This is still a very important occasion. No one may sleep, every light shall blaze, and no shadow of trouble may be allowed to darken the festivities then universal.

THIS NIGHT: A HSING

Vol. I, Leaf 7

This night is what night? the year pacing through the constellations is said to be ended;
Watches of night are long; candles shine bright: we must not misuse the moment.

In travellers' rest-house of Hsien Yang, City of Assembled Brilliance, not a single serious matter is discussed;
We all rejoice, and in order to be merry, take part in gambling at dice.

Startled, excited, I give a great shout and call 'five whites!'
Rolling up sleeves, throwing off shoes, in excitement I cannot distinguish *hsiao*, five whites, from *lu*, five blacks.

At times, warriors and heroes also behave thus;
Is it not then a good plan at an unexpected meeting?

My Lord does not smile?

Liu I, the noted gambler, at the beginning of his career was willing to pawn his clothes!
His home lacked even a small jar, a measure of grain, yet he lost a hundred ten thousands.

T'ien Pao, sixth revolution, thus opened happily, and indeed Tu Fu felt his spirits rise as a fresh opportunity of distinction offered. He says:

Sudden as a leaping flame, my hope; I aimed at vindication.

The Emperor, who possibly realized sub-consciously the need of fresh assistants and whose higher impulses continually strove to assert themselves, wished to hold a special examination whereby all scholars should find occasion for displaying their peculiar talents. Yüan Chieh, one of the competitors, reports the matter in an essay, the *Yü Yu Wên*, as follows:

T'IEN PAO, SIXTH REVOLUTION

It was decreed that in All-below-the-sky, those who had any aptitude should assemble below the Hub of the Chariot of Administration. Li Lin-fu commanded that the Shang Shu Shêng should arrange the trial. All were sent down. In accordance with the summons, no worthy men had remained in the wilds.

Both Tu Fu and Chieh responded to the Edict and, to use the Chinese idiom, which is identical with our College slang, were 'sent down,' in other words – they failed.

Ming Huang's good intentions were thus frustrated, and Li Lin-fu tightened his unworthy hold upon the reins of government. A feeling of helpless inertia began to hamper the scholars of the Empire; men realized that Li Lin-fu was determined that his own lack of education should not be made the more conspicuous by contrast with the brilliant minds of men to whom the sacred books were the warp and weft of life itself. Mr. Nung spoke in scathing tones of Li Lin-fu and his pretensions to scholarship, telling me rather a delightful story in this connection. It appears that a son was born to his wife's brother, and Lin-fu wrote a congratulatory scroll which was dispatched with great pomp. It bore the characters: *lung chang chih ch'ing*, which should read: 'the felicitous wish (that the child) may toy with an official seal,' or in other words: 'may the boy rise to official rank!' But alas! instead of combining the phonetic *chang* with the 'jade' radical, Lin-fu wrote it with the 'deer' radical. His scroll thus expressed the wish that the little boy might toy with a *chang*, which is a hornless tusked deer found near river banks. This absurdity caused ribald merriment among his many enemies at Court. How truly appalling! Fancy bearing the stigma of such a slip for nearly twelve hundred years!

PART II

Friendship with Wei Chi

T'IEN PAO, SEVENTH REVOLUTION. A.D. 748

During T'ien Pao, seventh revolution, Wei Chi, who held the high office of Yin or Overseer of Officials in Honan, living at Lo Yang, the East Capital, was promoted to the still higher post of Tso Ch'êng, Left Coadjutor, an office described as follows in the *T'ang Lu Tien, Six Statutes of the T'ang Dynasty:*

> Left and Right Coadjutors control and guide; they are the linch-pins in the chariot-wheel of government; they scrutinize and advise on the statutes and uphold the law.

In a word, they are among the chief assistants of the Son of Heaven, to whom they are expected to report anything they may consider wrong. In discussing this high office, Mr. Nung said: 'If a Tso Ch'êng dies or is dismissed, the post is often vacant for a long time, as not many men have sufficient learning to serve as Coadjutor. Wei Chi had inherited learning; his father and both his elder brothers had been High Ministers; he was a great scholar.'

It is difficult for us, who have been schooled in a different tradition, to realize the manifold implications which the mere pronouncement of the two words 'great scholar' still suggests to a Chinese trained in the indigenous school. In the opinion of such a one, riches and all the amenities of life should come to the scholar as a matter of course, and the favour of his companionship should be an honour widely sought. The most important function, however, which a successful scholar should fulfil, is, in these Chinese eyes, to advise the Son of

Heaven in regard to good government. Wei Chi's career can therefore be regarded as ideal. And he, the Great Man, was deeply impressed by Tu Fu, for whose future he felt solicitude. Three poems comprise the record of this friendship. The first was written before Wei Chi's promotion. He was still the Yin of Honan, and he actually, as Tu Fu tells us in a commentary preceding the poem, came in person to ask for news of the younger man. What a flutter there must have been in the village when the chariot of the Great Man drove up to the humble cottage!

> I, Fu, have my old hovel at the market-place of Yen, where a pressing enquiry was received from Lord Wei. For that reason there are the following phrases:

SENT, PRESENTED TO WEI, MY ELDER, THE YIN OF HONAN

Vol. I, Leaf 9

> A guest arrives: the Yin of Ho is announced;
> He asks the man who opens to him for news of K'ung Jung.

K'ung Jung, to whom Tu Fu compares himself, was a most precocious youth who lived in the third century A.D. I will not quote the whole poem, which is a veritable mosaic of allusions and must have rejoiced the heart of Wei Chi. A few lines, however, will throw light on Tu Fu's situation at the moment:

> Your food, Sir Wei, is served from cauldrons; you have the gateways of two mansions;

The arena of your literary production extends directly to *Kuo Fêng*, Book of the Poetry Classic.

Looking up respectfully, I realize the splendour of your attainments, beyond any on earth;
I remember my carelessness, lack of forethought, my road of poverty.

* * *

On rivers, lakes, in my short coat, I float hither, thither,
Like flying thistledown driven restlessly in frost, snow.

The great spaces of Heaven, Earth, are silent; unechoed is my fame;
Futile my learning, my art, which extend in all directions.

* * *

Your knowledge is coiled, interwoven; your intelligence supernatural in brilliance: I am filled with reverent awe;
Ballads, songs of the country, extol your virtue and rectitude.

The second poem too is very formal, complimentary, and, if I may so express it, literary in style, and was probably written while Tu Fu was still in Ch'ang An, although he returned to the East Capital soon after the disaster of the examinations. The third poem to Wei Chi, of whom we shall hear no more, is very different from the others. I feel that Tu Fu must have had personal intercourse with the older man to have become so intimate. He writes with no reserve; gives a detailed account of

events in their sequence, and expresses deep regret that he is unable to make acknowledgment of Wei Chi's kindness. The Chinese are still most meticulous on this point of returning favours; in the words of a popular proverb: 'He who cannot entertain within his doors, will find few doors open to him.'

After the crushing disappointment of a second failure, Tu Fu had begun to realize that forces, too strong to be combated and too evil to be accepted by any honourable man, were combining to keep all younger scholars from obtaining office. The poem is a cry from the very depths of his being.

OFFERED UP, PRESENTED TO THE OFFICIAL WEI, MY SENIOR

Vol. I, Leaf 9

Youths clad in white silk breeches do not die of hunger;
A great detriment to my person is the scholar's cap.

Older friend, consider, listen quietly;
Lesser one, by your leave, will raise up and lay before you in sequence all details.

I, Fu, formerly, in youth's day,
Was soon satiated with seeing countries, visiting, paying respects.

I studied writings, thumbed and tattered ten thousand scrolls;
As if possessed by divine spirit, I brought down on the white silk my hair pencil.

My prose pieces, I thought, competed with those of the writer Yang Hsiung;
My poems according to law I considered approached the work of Tzŭ Chien.

Li Yung, the high official, begged an introduction face to face;
Wang Han, the great scholar, was willing to live as my neighbour.

To myself I said, musing, this is an excess of swift advancement, of coming out from among my fellows;
I shall immediately rise to an important highway and reach the watercourse of recognition.

I shall transport my Lord, the Emperor, to the height of the ideal Rulers, Yao and Shun;
I will cause the wind of instruction to reform and again make pure and genuine the customs of the land.

Such my desire; contrary to this expectation I am lonely, poverty-stricken;
My running verses, songs, should not be for scholars out of office sitting by the waters of obscurity.

I ride my mule; thrice ten years have revolved;
I am eating the food of travellers at Flowery Capital in Spring.

As the sun rises, I tap timidly at a rich fellow's door;
When the sun sets I follow, stumbling in the dust of sleek horses.

Dregs of wine cups and cold food;
Arriving at each place, I conceal my grief, my bitterness.

Lord Above for a moment desired Government should invite good men to serve;
Sudden as a leaping flame my hope: I aimed at vindication.

Looking up to dark night sky, I am a bird with drooping wings;
Following my course with difficulty, not advancing, I am no swiftly darting fish.

Deep-felt my mortification; older friend is generous, kind;
Deep-felt my appreciation; older friend is sincere, direct.

Whenever you are with your one hundred associates,
Doubtless you chant exquisite fresh phrases.

I consider imitating the joy of Kung Kung;
'Twere difficult to experience the sweet poverty of Yüan Hsien.

How can I free my heart from resentment, discontent?
I can but depart, seclude myself, retire.

Now I would enter the Eastern Sea,
Or possibly go West to the land of Ch'in.

I long too for Chung Nan Hills,
I long to turn my head, and see the banks of clear Wei Waters.

My constant desire to return a meal
Now that I think of leaving the high official.

The white gull comes to its end in surging waves;
In ten thousand *li* who can tame it?

PART III

At the East Capital

T'IEN PAO, EIGHTH REVOLUTION: WINTER. A.D. 749

Tu Fu returned for a time, after the disaster of the examinations, to his 'hovel' near Lo Yang, the East Capital, which had been an historical centre since very early times. The next poem in the collection deals, however, not with a relic of ancient days but with a monument then comparatively new. I mean the fine temple to Lao Tzŭ, founder of Taoism, who died in the sixth century B.C., and who is often called Lao Chün, Lao the Princely Man.

Although the legend of his birth has been told many times, I must repeat it, as his first words bear upon incidents which occurred over twelve hundred years later. These first words, uttered as he, already a white-haired man, issued from the left side of his mother who lay beneath a plum-tree, were: 'From this tree I take my surname.' Now this surname Li was identical with the surname of the family who in A.D. 618 ascended the Dragon Throne and founded the T'ang dynasty. Three years later, an individual was walking on the Ram's Horn Hill, when the apparition of a venerable greybeard, dressed in flowing white garments, rose before him. The apparition spoke, saying: 'Inform the T'ang dynasty Son of Heaven that I, Lao Chün, am his forebear.' When this message was conveyed to Kao Tsu, then Emperor, he was filled with delight, albeit the delight was tempered with awe. He commanded that sacrifice be immediately offered up on the very spot where the apparition had manifested itself; and, as speedily as might be, erected a

temple and bestowed upon Lao Tzŭ the title Hsüan Yüan Huang Ti, Heavenly Primary Supreme Ruler.

The cult of the Great Ancestor grew and became crystallized as the Taoist religion, more or less as it is known to-day, although the form it took when thus organized under the T'ang dynasty, twelve hundred years after the death of its founder, had remarkably little connection with his abstruse teaching. When the imperious Empress Wu occupied the throne, Taoism suffered a temporary eclipse and Buddhist influence became very strong; but when Ming Huang succeeded in restoring the power of the house of Li, he dispersed the Buddhist priests and revived the cult of Tao, with all the magic practice thereto attached.

During K'ai Yüan, twenty-ninth year, A.D. 741, Ming Huang, who, as we are told, 'studied and practised' the Way recommended by the *Tao Tê Ching*, the classic of Taoism, erected temples to Lao Tzŭ in both Capitals and in each Prefectual city, and during T'ien Pao, second revolution, A.D. 743, went himself to 'raise his hands in reverence before the shrine,' and then ordered that the temple to Lao Tzŭ in the Capital be called a Palace Hall.

Thus Taoism became more or less an Imperial religion, and the buildings erected for its use were worthy of the builders. Ming Huang summoned the great painter Wu Tao-tzŭ and commanded that he, who could represent with consummate skill 'human beings, religious figures, spirits and demons, hills and streams, terraces and halls, as well as plants and trees,' should embellish temple walls. And what frescoes he must have painted!

T'ien Pao, eighth revolution, during the Sixth Moon, Ming Huang, in an elaborate ceremony, gave the title of Shêng Jên, or Enlightened Men, to the five Emperors of

the house of Li who had preceded him on the throne. This is a title reserved for the highest examples of human perfection. The five ancestors so honoured are referred to as the Wu Shêng, the Five Enlightened Men. As Tu Fu refers to the 'Wu Shêng painting' by Wu Tao-tzŭ, we have a clue to the date of his visit: it must have been after A.D. 749.

I wish that I might quote the poem; it is very interesting, but the explanations necessary to its comprehension would cover pages. Tu Fu went on a winter day, and describes the 'green tiles at the beginning of emptiness,' and the 'gold stalk,' a metal pillar with an immense hand at the top, the hand serving to catch the dew so freely used by Taoist alchemists. He says:

> Hills, streams, support the decorated doorway;
> Sun, moon, shine on carved beams.

He refers to ceremonies when the Emperor wore Dragon robes and the cap from which pearls are suspended in strings; talks of the one thousand officials who filed in like a 'line of wild geese'; notes the dark cedar which holds shadows and the pears turned red by frost; hears the wind playing sweet airs on reed instruments tied to the 'jade pillars,' and the crackle of ice on the 'silver windlass' above the 'well of dew.' In fact, his writing-brush, full of life's movement, builds anew the Palace Hall which stood so long ago on Mang Mountain, North of Lo Yang, and was the 'Capital of Creation,' presided over by Lao Tzŭ, The Heavenly, The Primary, The Supreme Ruler.

PART IV

In Ch'ang An

T'IEN PAO, NINTH AND TENTH REVOLUTIONS.

A.D. 750–751

The distance between Lo Yang and the West Capital is not great, and evidently Tu Fu frequently went to and fro. Two poems to Li T'ai-po who is away, travelling in Wu and Yüeh, appear during this period; one, of a very studied character, may have been written while still in Lo Yang. I quote a few lines only:

A WINTER DAY; THINKING OF LI PO

Vol. I, Leaf 12

Still, solitary, in quiet room where I write,
Since early dawn I have thought only of you.

* * *

Wind, frost, penetrate my short coat;
Days, moons, pass slowly while I wait for your returning boat.

The other, 'Treasuring Thoughts of Li Po on a Spring Day,' was certainly written in the vicinity of Ch'ang An, as Tu Fu speaks of being by the River Wei. The poem appears in *Fir-Flower Tablets*.

Men of the Capital were at this time much stirred by the triumphs of General Kao Hsien-chih, a Korean in the service of Ming Huang, who, a couple of years earlier, had led troops even as far as across the Pamirs, and who, during T'ien Pao eighth revolution, came in person to appear before the Son of Heaven and report on his

prowess. Tu Fu, whose passion for horses lasted throughout his life, wrote a *hsing* on the General's famous dark war-horse, which was evidently a dappled, or as the Chinese still express it, a 'flowered' horse. Tu Fu speaks of the 'five-coloured scattered flowers, covering his body like clouds,' and mentions too that 'the strong youths of Ch'ang An do not dare to mount and ride.' The creature must have been exceedingly fiery, as the strong youths of Ch'ang An, living as they did in a horse-breeding country, were expert riders.

From the beginning of T'ien Pao, the difficulties with tribes on the different borders of the Empire became more and more acute, but the first mention, on Tu Fu's part, of conscription occurs after his return to the Capital in this year. A commentator remarks:

> 'Hsüan Tsung, latter years, supply of soldiers exhausted; conscription of men to guard frontiers, incessant; provinces harassed; this poem a pretext whereby the Master, in speaking of those forced to follow the army, can unloose his secret thoughts.'

WAR CHARIOTS – A HSING

Vol. I, Leaf 13

lin! lin! chariots jangle; *hsiao! hsiao!* horses snort;
Men move forward; at his hip each wears arrows and a bow.

Fathers, mothers, wives, children, all come out to say farewell;
Dust in clouds: they cannot see the near-by Huo Yang Bridge.

They drag at the men's coats, fall beneath their feet, obstruct the road, weeping;
Sound of weeping rises straight; divides the soft white clouds.

On the road, passers-by question the marching men;
Marching men reply: 'Dots against our names; we are hurried away.'

Followers who are ten years and five, go North to guard the river;
When they reach four tens, go West to dig encampment fields.

On leaving, Village Senior wraps a cloth about their heads;
On returning, their hair is white: they have continuously kept watch at frontiers.

At frontier territories blood flows like waters of the sea;
To open those frontiers is the unceasing desire of the Military Emperor.

* * *

Does my Lord not hear? – the Han Clan have two hundred prefectures East of the Mountain;
In a thousand hamlets, a myriad abodes, brambles, alders grow.

Propriety is outraged; the stronger women grasp the hoe, the plough;
Grain springs on dykes, in fields; divisions East and West are wiped out.

Moreover, soldiers of Ch'in again endure hardships of battle;
They submit to being driven on, as though they did not differ from dogs or fowls.

* * *

Even if the elders ask questions,
How dare conscript soldiers express resentment?

Thus it is in the winter of this very year:
West of the Pass arming of soldiers does not cease.

The Official of the Central District urgently seeks taxes in kind;
Where shall they come from, rentals, taxes in kind?

We must admit, giving birth to sons is bad;
All is changed: giving birth to daughters is good.

A daughter is born: we still can give her in marriage, keep her as a neighbour;
A son is born: he is buried without rites among the one hundred grasses.

Does my Lord not see? – at the head of the Green Lake
White bones have lain since early ages, and none to gather them.

New ghosts are perplexed at wanton ill-usage; old ghosts cry;
Dark sky, wetting rain; sound of their cries – *chiu! chiu!*

Having no official business to transact, Tu Fu was at leisure to visit famous sites, of which opportunity he availed himself freely. An often-quoted poem refers to an excursion taken with Kao Shih and others to the pagoda at Tz'ŭ En, Temple of Compassionate Grace, East of the Capital. This pagoda, which had six stories and was then three hundred feet high, still exists – or did in 1922 when Dr. Sirén visited what was once Ch'ang An. It is called the Great Wild Goose Tower, and was established by the Buddhist priest Hsüan Chuang after

A.D. 645, when he returned from India with the sacred texts of Buddhism. I have omitted four cryptic lines in which Tu Fu, by means of simile, criticizes the Bright Emperor and his favourite Yang Kuei-fei.

MOUNTING THE PAGODA AT TZ'Ŭ EN, TEMPLE OF COMPASSIONATE GRACE, TOGETHER WITH MANY SCHOLARS

Vol. I, Leaf 13

High, straight, we step over threshold of vast azure sky;
No moment when tearing wind desists.

I am no master of contented thought,
But climbing here transforms one hundred sorrows.

I realize and appreciate the strength of the Sainted Figures' Teaching;
Am able to enter fully into its deep interpretation.

Head thrown back, my eyes pierce this dragon's, serpent's hole;
Now I emerge from darkness among props and buttresses.

The Seven Stars are at the North doorway;
I hear the River of Heaven flowing to the West.

Hsi Ho, the Charioteer, whips the white sun;
Shao Hao, Spirit of Seventh Moon, leads clear Autumn.

Mountains of Ch'in suddenly seem broken atoms;
I cannot distinguish clear Wei River from muddy Ching.

Leaning forwards, looking down, only one stretch of mist;
How can I recognize Imperial Domain?

* * *

Yellow crane never ceases in its flight;
It utters plaintive cries; whither does it go, what does it seek?

Observe, my Lord, wild geese following the sun:
Each has a plan for gathering harvest from the fields of rice!

In case my readers miss the point of the last line, I would say that the birds searching for food remind Tu Fu of the courtiers in Hsüan Tsung's Palace, each one seeking his individual profit.

Lack of occupation had its disadvantages. Tu Fu was very poor. Perhaps, too, the illnesses which were to turn his life into a veritable martyrdom were already incipient; at all events, he now had a bad attack of malaria, and a certain Wang was very good to him.

AFTER ILLNESS, GOING ACROSS TO SEE WANG; LEANING BACK AND DRINKING WINE; A SONG PRESENTED

Vol. I, Leaf 14

A *ch'i lin's* horn, a *fêng huang's* beak are not recognized as remarkable in the world;
Boil them to glue and join the broken string of a lute: their virtue is forthwith revealed.

I go to see friend Wang who cherishes kindly feelings in his heart;
In what does his affection for me, Fu, find its origin?

* * *

Long ago I went to friend Wang who comforted and gave me aid;
He knew me, the humble one, intimately, and did not scorn my poverty-stricken obscurity.

He plainly saw that I was cold and half famished, nor was I concerned to hide my need;
Immersed for a year in many ailments, I was afflicted and had no strength.

Friend Wang was startled at my bad colour;
I answered saying, 'I lie on the pillow; my difficulties, my miseries are many;

Three autumn months the tiger of malaria has pursued me; who can endure it?
Ague, fever, interlocked a hundred days, have battled one with the other.

Head white, eyes dim; I have sat until callous;
Flesh yellow, skin shrivelled, my life is like a thread.'

* * *

My friend pitied me indeed: my strength not yet returned,
On my account he made every effort: he ordered fine, delicate foods.

He sent someone off to market to buy on credit
fragrant *kêng* rice;
He called his wife to leave her room, come near
and serve the meal herself.

Ch'ang An winter pickles! pungent, moreover
an inviting green;
Golden City native curds! clear, white like
boiled raw silk.

In addition he begged most excellent, freshly
killed meat,
And bought secretly a measure of wine that all
might be ready for a feast.

In these latter days, who is loving and depend-
able like my dear old friend!
At his command lightness at once returns to
my hands and feet.

* * *

I, the old horse, become a colt; it is true! I do
not simulate;
At this time my hope is realized; how much more
then should my regard for him deepen!

Whenever in this remainder of the year I can
afford to eat a full meal,
If you are not occupied and so please, we will
spend a long time together.

'Ah,' said Mr. Nung, when we had read the poem, 'Wang, although a poor man, is a good friend. We can see from the words that he is poor: he has no servant to send to market, so is obliged to ask a neighbour to go, and he calls his wife herself to come from the inner apartment

and prepare a meal for Tu Fu. That shows great affection!'

But Tu Fu was not entirely dependent upon friends for assistance, as certain members of the Tu Clan then lived in Ch'ang An. For instance, the Master writes to his *ts'ung sun* or 'connected grandson,' that is his father's elder brother's son's son's – son! Chinese relationships bid fair to make a translator throw down his work in desperation, so infinitely varied, so meticulously detailed are the degrees referred to. However, I continue: we would explain the relationship as that of 'cousin's grandson,' and the poem suggests by poetical allusion that people of the same roots should maintain affectionate intimacy.

HANDED DOWN TO MY COUSIN'S GRANDSON CHI

Vol. I, Leaf 15

At level dawn I mounted mule, went out;
Did not know to whose door I should go.

At the gates of opportunists many individuals speak fair words; their slanders ripple like the waves;
Therefore I come again to seek my cousin's grandson.

My cousin's grandson is poor, has no employment;
He dwells a stranger, as in a deserted village.

Before his hall bamboos spring of their own accord;
Behind his hall Forget-sorrow Grass grows self-sown.

Autumn sees Forget-sorrow Grass already dead,
But even in frost bamboo branches do not change.

To scour rice, draw but surface water;
If drawn too deep, well water is full of mud.

Do not loose the hand when cutting sunflowers:
Sunflower roots are injured if the hand be loosed.

For a long time I, the old man, have been listless,
my mind is dull;
You, my boy, I notice, move with energetic step.

We are relatives, of one Clan; I come because of
our ancestors
And not for a dish at the evening meal.

Lesser men find pleasure in filling their mouths:
A poor custom! it is difficult to enjoy discussion
with such.

Let us not endure jealousy and suspicion of
strangers;
Our surname is the same; since early days it has
stood fast.

Another relation who was more generously endowed with this world's goods, Tu Fu calls a 'younger brother'; but that does not mean that the Master and he were actually brothers, though it does mean that they were of the same generation. Tu Wei had married the daughter of Li Lin-fu's younger brother, and naturally shared in the good fortunes of his uncle-in-law. From Tu Fu's description his house must have been large, and gaily decorated for the ceremonies connected with 'passing over the year.' The Red Pepper Dish he speaks of is purely ornamental; the shining pouches, being scarlet, the

colour of happiness, are carefully arranged on a platter to provide an appropriate garnish. When New Year dawns, everyone considers that a year is added to his age, and Tu Fu states that he will be forty when T'ien Pao begins its tenth revolution.

A NEW YEAR VIGIL AT TU WEI'S HOUSE

Vol. I, Leaf 15

The year has paced through the constellations, we hold vigil in the house of my younger brother;
The Red Pepper Dish has already been extolled in song.

All assembled are of one mind; from the stable comes noise of horses;
Glare from the candles arranged in rows startles crows from the trees.

At bright dawn my years will bridge four tens;
I fly, I gallop towards the slanting shadows of sunset.

Who can alter this, who can bridle, who restrain the moments?
Fiery intoxication is a life's career.

The last day of the First Moon, T'ien Pao tenth revolution, finds Tu Fu at a feast in the Lo Yu Yüan, Joy of Travellers' Plain, which had been a pleasure ground since the days of the Han Emperors. Ming Huang's intrepid sister, the Princess of Great Peace, had there built a pavilion which, so says the *New Record of the Two Capitals*, 'she visited on the last day of the First Moon, on the third day of the Third Moon, and on the ninth day of the Ninth Moon, in order to rejoice.' The garden itself was evidently open to the public, as the record goes on to describe the joyful gatherings which then took place, and closes with the words: 'when the sun rose, men and women returned to the market-place of the Capital.' Tu Fu speaks of the feast, which was of a 'very high nature,' mentions the maidens who perform posturing dances, whose sleeves 'brush the water,' describes wine as the 'one creation,' and closes with the lines:

Drinking ended, this person is without return-to place;
Stands alone, dreary, without objective, humming poems to himself.

The lovely Joy of Travellers' Plain lay among the hills South of Ch'ang An, not far from the hamlet of Tu Ling where Tu Fu was born, and in the autumn of the year he thinks of returning to live in either the northern or the southern hamlet of Tu. This fact is gleaned from a set of three little poems written in a new form: that is, each contains five phrases. Tu Fu is immensely pleased with his invention, of which he says:

> This form is not of the present, nor is it of the past.

He further relates the effect it had upon its hearers:

> How stirred were the emotions of younger brother, nephew! their tears like rain!

The poems were written at the Ch'ü Chiang, the Crooked or Zigzag River, whereof we shall hear a great deal. I quote the first and third. Li Kuang, referred to at the end of number three, was an individual of early days, famous as a military commander. He lived and hunted among the very mountains where Tu Fu contemplated building a hut, and history relates an encounter between him and a tiger – or rather a stone which he took to be a tiger. His outstanding characteristic was an extreme paucity of words, and in this trait at least Tu Fu can hardly be said to have emulated him.

CH'Ü CHIANG. THREE STANZAS. EACH STANZA FIVE PHRASES

Vol. II, Leaf I

I

Ch'ü Chiang deserted, desolate, in high breath of autumn;
Lotus, caltrop, decayed, snapped off, follow the wind-tossed waves.

Wandering in lonely places, I think sadly of the two old parents in their declining years.

White pebbles, pale sand, are also driven by wind and water;
The pitiful wild swan calls alone, seeking his fellows.

III

Myself, cut off from life, will rest a while and ask of Heaven.

Hamlet of Tu is favoured with mulberry and hemp fields;
Therefore am about to move to the beautiful South Hills border.

Astride a horse, in my short coat, will follow Li Kuang;
Seeing fierce tigers, will shoot them to end of declining years.

The theme of poverty and friendship suggested by Tu Fu's next *hsing*, drew from Mr. Nung a long dissertation on friendship among his countrymen as exemplified by the story of Kuan Lo, generally called Kuan Chung, and Pao Shu-ya, who, although they lived in the seventh century before our era, still suggest by the mere mention of their names ideal friendship between a rich person and one who though talented is poor. Through the encouragement provided by Pao Shu-ya, the penniless Kuan Chung actually became Minister of State, a position he filled most effectively; nor were they ever parted as 'rain is parted from the clouds,' a simile frequently used to express a broken friendship.

FRIENDSHIP AND POVERTY – A HSING

Vol. II, Leaf 2

Turn up the palm, clouds gather; reverse the palm, rain falls and leaves those clouds for ever!
Why even mention what is so trifling a matter to the many, the many?

Does my Lord not know that Kuan Lo in his
days of poverty was united in friendship to
the wealthy Pao Shu-ya?
Men of the present abandon this road as though
it were but a rough field.

Incidents which have come under my own observation have proved to me that the bonds of friendship in China are more tightly drawn than they are in the West, and the responsibilities recognized as being inherent to friendship are far more onerous – nor are these responsibilities often evaded.

It were idle to contend that the treatment he had received, combined with the unfortunate facts which were becoming a matter of common knowledge – I mean the extravagance, the corruption, indeed the disorganization of the Court – had had no influence on Tu Fu. A note of irony and cynicism is beginning to be apparent in the poems; and indeed it is small wonder. The *hsing* on 'White Silk-thread' is of course figurative. Tu Fu is referring to himself, his own sincerity, and incidentally to the reckless waste indulged in behind the rose-red walls of the Imperial City.

WHITE SILK-THREAD – A HSING

Vol. II; Leaf 2

It is necessary that the silk reeled off cocoons be
long; it is not necessary that it be white;
It is measured with a gold rice-in-husk foot-rule,
to make openwork gauze of Yüeh, flowered
brocade of Shu.

Jade hands lay the deep red tangle of threads on the ivory bed;
The green colour put forth by a thousand flowers, ten thousand grasses, seems collected and brought together.

I grieve that, following the fashion of the time, this plain raw silk is already dyed;
When cut from the creaking loom its colour was a ray of light.

Lovely women consider it carefully; use the fire-filled iron to make it smooth;
Cut out, sew their garments, on which all traces of thread and needle are invisible.

They put on Spring time dresses to dance before the Prince;
Sulphur butterflies flit towards them, yellow orioles call.

Flying threads of falling willow buds seem also to be attracted
To the gossamer garments which lift in shining sun light, following the wind.

Fine dust, fragrant moisture of the body soil silk that is dyed;
The ladies open out new robes, discard the old: do we realize how wanton the extravagance?

* * *

Does my Lord not see it is difficult to drag out, lead forth, talented scholars! they are anxious, apprehensive;
Rejected, discarded, they endure the life of wanderers who lodge in inns.

PART V

Border Warfare

Palace disorder was, however, not the only cause of apprehension and distress. At this time Border warfare increased with the speed of fire; nor was it all defensive warfare and, as such, legitimate. By no means. The Son of Heaven seemed obsessed by a desire to open out his boundaries, and one of the most useful instruments in the fulfilment of this desire was the fiery General Ko-shu Han, whose name will occur later in connection with tragic happenings.

During T'ien Pao, sixth revolution, he, Ko-shu Han, had been appointed Governor of the North-western Provinces, and had proceeded towards the Jade Gate which leads to Central Asia in order to take up his post. Tu Fu now writes a cycle of nine poems dealing with the warfare under Ko-shu Han, and in so doing expresses his own opinion in regard to such fighting very clearly.

Several Chinese idioms occur which may seem strange to Western readers. In stanza two the conscript uses the expression, 'to go out from the door,' which is also used when a daughter marries or when a son enters the priesthood. In each case the individual no longer counts as a member of the Clan. The terms 'my bones' and 'my flesh' mean father and mother: bones are looked upon as a heritage from one's father, while flesh is supplied by the maternal line.

In stanza three the Ch'i Lin Pavilion referred to is a Hall of Fame where the portraits of great and successful generals are hung.

The opening line of stanza four shows that the conscript is a member of the family, not a lone individual; the

THE WADDED GARMENT

[See Glossary]

elders' spoken of are his own relations, to whom he is responsible for his body, since that is simply the property of the Clan. It is laid down in the *Book of Rites* that a body shall be delivered to the World of Shade in the same condition that it is received from one's parents, which is the principal reason that the Chinese object so strongly to amputation or any mutilation. During the late troubles in China, a friend of mine saw a woman by the roadside, carefully sewing her husband's head to his dead body that he might reach the other world in a suitable condition. The relations of the 'six degrees' are: father, mother, elder and younger brothers, wife and sons, and the Chinese ideal of happiness is that all shall till the fields and meet the struggle of life together.

In stanza nine, Tu Fu closes with the bitter reflection that, whereas study and the arts of Peace should bring the most highly coveted rewards, under the present condition of strife, the ambitions of men are best realized by military success at the Four Quarters.

Number six, which appears in *Fir-Flower Tablets*, is omitted.

GOING OUT FROM THE FRONTIER

Vol. II, Leaf 2

I

Heart-sick, heart-sick, leave old village;
Far off, far off, approach Chiao River.

Imperial House has appointed a definite time;
To evade command would envelop me in net of disaster.

Lord already possesses sufficient districts, territory:
Why open innumerable new frontiers?

I must be severed from, renounce, father's, mother's love;
Stifling sobs, spear across my back, I go.

II

The day I went out from door is already far off;
I no longer endure ridicule of fellow foot-soldiers.

Can love of father, mother, my bones, my flesh, be cut off?

The moment I, their son, must die is not yet known.

Fleet horse tosses bridle from head;
Hand still grasps green raw-silk reins.

Nimbly I clamber down ten thousand sharp-cut rocks;
Bending my body, I try to seize a flag.

III

I grind my sword at Wu Yen, stream of grief;
Water is red, the blade wounds my hand.

Would that this cutting-bowels sound could cease!
My heart and mind have long been tangled in this disorder.

Fine men have taken oaths, are promised to the country;
Of what avail this recurring blaze of resentment?

High achievement, fame; a portrait in Ch'i Lin Pavilion!
Bones on battlefield rot quickly and decay!

IV

Since there are older members of the family to take leave of me, the foot-soldier,
I, the far-off frontier guard, feel a responsibility for my body.

Life is before me, or is it death? I must go forward;
I do not vex the conscript officer who in passion rails angrily.

On the road I meet a man; we recognize each other;
I entrust to him a writing for my relations of the six degrees.

Alas! *ai-tsai!* severed, cut apart,
Never again shall we together meet the bitter struggle for life!

V

Far off, far off, ten thousand *li* and more
They lead me; I go to the Three Armies.

In the armies hardship, ease, fall unequally;
How can the Commander in Chief hear everything?

At Dividing River see Hu Barbarians riding horses,
Hurriedly, suddenly, several hundred groups.

Now, in the beginning, I am a despised slave;
At what time shall I set up a reputation for great service to the State?

VII

I urge my horse, Heaven rains snow;
The Army moves, enters high hills.

Paths precipitous, I cling to cold rocks;
My fingers drop amidst the layers of ice.

Have already gone far from moon of Han;
What day shall I return to pound down foundations of city walls?

At sunset floating clouds pass to the South;
I can gaze upon them but can not grasp them with my hands.

VIII

The Chan Yü steals upon our ramparts;
The wind dust-laden; a hundred *li* are dark.

Fierce two-edged swords: four, five, strokes;
That horde because of us stampedes.

The famous chieftain of the Tiger-Men returns with us;
At the palisade gate we deliver him tied by the neck.

Lowly persons prepare to stand in serried ranks;
One victory! Why so much talk!

IX

Have followed army ten years and more;
My ability is without a divided inch of recognition.

All men are eager to attain official rank;
Am on point of speaking but am diffident, lest as thunder rolls, I but re-echo words of others.

On the plains of the Central State there are struggles, contests,
With Barbarians of the North and Wild Tribes of the West.

At the Four Quarters brave men fulfil ambition;
How then escape unending woe?

The fiery Ko-shu Han was no scholar, in fact his ideas

of learning were rudimentary; his respect for letters was, however, praiseworthy, and he included in his suite as Keeper of Records the poet Kao Shih whom Tu Fu had met in Shantung and with whom he had later climbed the pagoda at the Temple of Compassionate Mercy. What inducements Ko-shu Han had been able to offer we do not know, but they must have been substantial indeed to persuade the poet to accompany him.

It is true that Kao Shih was weary of waiting for suitable employment in the unfavourable atmosphere of Ch'ang An, and we know from a line in one of his poems that he abhorred the minor post, that of Wei, which he was obliged to fill. District Magistrates who did not themselves like to hold the interrogations which were, and are, an integral part of the judicial system indigenous to China, deputed a Wei to carry them out. The Wei was obliged to extract from the wretched victim a confession of guilt, and to superintend 'the beating by which he remembered' – a most unpleasant task! The Chinese theory of justice is the reverse of ours, which presupposes innocence until guilt is proved, and being the outcome of a social system founded on collective family responsibility and the force of example, it is probable that in practice the Chinese system is less unreasonable than at first sight appears. A very experienced missionary who worked in the prisons in Hunan once told me that in his opinion there were few cases of wrongful detention. The question is too elaborate to discuss in detail, but one thing is certain: the theory of punishment, if divorced from the social system from which it has sprung, is cruel in the extreme. Kao Shih writes sadly:

> Am familiar with lashing and beating which cause suffering among the people.

Nevertheless life at the frontier must have been difficult to face. Perhaps he felt that employment with Ko-shu Han might open a door to greater things – as indeed it did. Kao Shih is the only one of the brilliant coterie of poets then assembled at the Capital who retained office to the end of his life. Tu Fu, for his part, considers a post near the Jade Gate under a man of no education as tantamount to exile and distinctly beneath the dignity of a scholar – a scholar, moreover, who is fifty years of age. However, he writes Kao Shih a poem on leave-taking, and follows it up some time later with a short note of congratulation on further preferment. In this he refers to the poems of victory which Kao Shih wrote by command of the general, and speaks sadly of his own misuse of opportunity, using in this connection the Chinese expression, 'one who has slipped and stumbled.'

A commentary explains the military situation. At the encampments by Chi Shih Chün in Kansu, the Province where Stones are Piled, each year when the millet was ripe, the T'u Fan, who grew nothing themselves, made raids across the frontier and seized the grain. So usual did this procedure become that the people on the Border described the encampments, and their own farmsteads for the matter of that, as 'the harvest fields of the T'u Fan.' During T'ien Pao, sixth revolution, Ko-shu Han ambushed his men on either side of the advancing tribes, closed in behind them, cutting off retreat, then fell upon and decimated them. 'Not a man succeeded in returning to his hamlet.' Elated by this victory, Ko-shu Han proceeded to invade the border districts, the T'u Fan retreated continually before him, leading him further and further into the desert wastes. Tu Fu implores Kao Shih to advise Han to be content with guarding the frontier.

TAKING LEAVE OF KAO THIRTY-FIVE, THE KEEPER OF RECORDS

Vol. II, Leaf 3

At K'ung T'ung small millet is ripe;
Objective should be to halt Imperial soldiers there.

Pray, Sir, ask Commander-in-Chief
To what purpose does he cause poverty, dearth?

The hungry falcon not satiated with flesh
Inclines its wings and flies as man directs.

Kao, my teacher, astride a saddled horse,
Reminds me of rough fellows from Yu or Ping in the North.

Your person escapes from among the Pu, the Wei, minor officers;
Even in the beginning you wrote a poem, expressing your dislike of the life.

Pray may I ask what official post you now hold,
Butting into the heated turbulence of Wu Wei on the Northern frontier?

You reply, saying: 'I am a Keeper of Records';
I wonder, are you ashamed that the scholars of the Empire should know?

Surely people will not easily comprehend;
It is essential, moreover, to act with circumspection in regard to decorous usages of mankind.

For long years you go out to the Record Office in a tent;
You yourself will be able to grasp the fluttering banners of success.

This time, on going, you are already a prominent man who has advanced before others;
It is enough to bring great comfort to your thoughts.

Men can attain the honour and rank they desire,
Even in the days of old age.

* * *

I often feel resentment that we are so seldom knotted together in joy,
Each at one edge of Heaven.

We are placed as is Tsên, star of the West, in regard to Shang, star of the East;
Cruel cruel! grief reaches the very centre of my bowels.

I fear the wind which blows the snow goose from the swan;
We cannot accomplish our distant flight in company.

Yellow dust envelops Sha Mo Desert;
I think of you, my friend; when should you return?

In the frontier city you will have energy to spare:
Send me soon a 'Following the Army' poem.

SENT TO KAO THIRTY-FIVE, THE RECORDER

Vol. II, Leaf 4

I sigh, I long for my old friend, my teacher Kao;
Many were the new poems he wrote each day.

Man has not equalled the glory of his fame;
The exquisite phrases, to whom will they now be expressed?

The Commander in Chief treasures the gifted one;
Mount K'ung T'ung rings with songs of victory.

I hear that my Lord has already received the vermilion sash;
I, who have slipped and stumbled, am thereby comforted.

PART VI

The Three Great Rites

T'IEN PAO, TENTH REVOLUTION. A.D. 751

As far as I am aware, the Chinese have no legend analogous to our Pandora myth which accounts for the existence of Hope; nevertheless, hope being a blessed and universal state, they succumb to its influence as readily as do we, and Tu Fu, though subdued, still hoped.

And his hope seemed based on reason. Fresh opportunity presenting itself, he seized it, as one might say, with both hands. It became known that during the tenth revolution of T'ien Pao, Ming Huang would perform Three Great Rites:

Firstly, the Son of Heaven would visit the T'ai Ch'ing Kung, Palace of Great Purity, and there pay respect to His ancestor Lao Tzŭ, Heavenly Primary Supreme Ruler.

Secondly, He would, at the T'ai Miao, Temple of Immensity, worship the Ancestral Tablets of the Dynasty; and

Thirdly, He would worship Heaven and Earth at the Southern Border of the Capital, and having the welfare of His people at heart, would also inspect their fields.

Forthwith Tu Fu composed three *fu* on the Three Great Rites. His friend, the Emperor's nephew of whom I have already spoken, who was popularly known as Prince Ferment, President of the Board of Barm, arranged that the compositions should reach his Imperial Uncle; this they did, being actually presented in the

Palace of P'êng Lai, Yang Kuei-fei's private residence, while she and the Emperor were feasting. Ming Huang, whose impetuous enthusiasm made him a sincere patron of the arts, was enchanted. I will let Tu Fu himself state the fact:

> Heaven's Son left his food and issued a command:
> I joined the band of noblemen who use fine chariots and wear fine clothes.

This was a veritable triumph. The band of noblemen to whom Tu Fu refers, were scholars and men of talent assembled at the Chi Hsien Yüan or Garden where the Talented are Perched, there to await examination, or in some cases further orders. Certain ancient records state that the three *fu* were presented during T'ien Pao, thirteenth revolution, but the weight of internal evidence, to say nothing of the fact that the Rites themselves were then held, is overwhelmingly in favour of T'ien Pao, tenth revolution. Years later, when in the far West, Tu Fu described the scene on his introduction to the pavilion of blue-coated scholars.

> Recall offering up three *fu* in P'êng Lai Palace.
> Myself I marvelled that in one day fame could blaze a red-hot fire.

> The venerable scholars of Chi Hsien made a surrounding wall,
> Watching me let fall my writing-brush in Official Recorder's Hall.

> On that day the glowing colour of my composition moved the Lord of Men.

As for the *fu* themselves, I will not attempt to render the lines glittering with allusions to everything in Chinese cosmogony, actual or legendary. The prose Foreword, however, wherein Tu Fu manages to convey 'his secret thoughts,' veiled though they be with conventional phrases, is interesting and reads:

> I, named Fu, who prostrate myself before the Emperor, speak, saying: 'I have grown to manhood below the steps of the throne where plain and honest customs have prevailed; have lived four times ten revolutions of the year in the company who inhabit wild places where herds of deer congregate; have trodden with independent steps through the luxuriant grass and tall forests of the Empire. Thus have I done since the fragile year of capping time.
>
> Can it be that in the Nine Prefectures there are no leaders who act as shepherds and each year offer to their Superior the services of talented men living in the wilds whose mentality is unequalled?
>
> Can it be that when the Bright Edict was issued from below the steps of the throne, He who reclined upon His sitting-mat did not treasure in the centre of His heart thoughts of pre-eminent men?
>
> I, who prostrate myself before the Emperor, am stupid, foolish, and so retiring that I fail to discharge my duty. Because of this, it is incumbent upon me to remain as though submerged by water or buried in the earth.
>
> I dare not fail to acquiesce; I dare not become roused and boast of prowess; I will retire in secret

to the joys of fishing and gathering firewood. I will condemn myself to exile; it is the end!

* * *

I rejoice to meet the hour of State Rites at Temples and Altars; and scarcely realize that my feet dance and my hands gesticulate. The nature of this joy is on the tablet of my writings. I sip, I revel in the flavour of its sweet juice; I drift into, float on the rhythm of its aura; sounds of its harmony gradually increase. All this is stored within the scroll. My joy has also flowed from ancient poems.

I trust that I have made clear my thoughts; the form and style are unpolished, blunt, verily unfit to brush past the High, the Sublime, the Listening Ears of Heaven; nor will it compare with the enduring worth of historical writings.

I fear that opportunity of serving the Above One as a horse or as a dog has gone by; I shall bear resentment even to the Nine Springs.

Reverently bowing the head, I throw this into the Prolonged Mercy Casket; hand up and present this statement to the Above One.

* * *

The one named Fu, who prostrates himself before the Emperor, is truly apprehensive; he strikes his head upon the ground; he strikes his head upon the ground, and utters these respectful words.

The months in the Chi Hsien Yüan, when he was surrounded by congenial companions, must have been among the happiest Tu Fu, now forty years of age, ever passed. To be sure, the extravagance in the Palace was

causing great discontent among all classes of the people; furthermore, the increasing power of Li Lin-fu was most disturbing; but the road of opportunity was again opening out, and Tu Fu might yet realize the ambition he expressed in his poem to Wei Chi:

> I shall transport my Lord, the Emperor, to the height of the ideal Rulers, Yao and Shun;
> I will cause the wind of instruction to reform and again make pure and genuine the customs of the land.

Meanwhile he prepared for a literary examination which, it had been announced by Imperial Decree, was to be held during T'ien Pao, eleventh revolution.

The examination took place. Li Lin-fu, who had come to be known as the Old Man of Heaven, insisted upon himself acting as chief examiner. Once again he became the laughing-stock of the learned, betraying his shallow knowledge of calligraphy by mistaking the character *ti*, eminent, for *chang*, a cudgel. The humble translator, twelve hundred years later, cannot but feel a secret sympathy with Li Lin-fu in this case: the difference in the appearance of the two characters is of the slightest description, a mere triviality caused by the pressure of the brush, but the difference in their sense! Ah! that is another matter.

An examination controlled by so inefficient an individual could but end in mockery – mockery, however, of a most serious character for its victims, and among these victims must be numbered the son of Tu.

Failure meant departure from the Chi Hsien Yüan, the intellectual life within its walls, and the scholars in whose company Tu Fu had rejoiced. The only grain of com-

fort to be extracted from the situation was that the 'Three Fu of the Great Rites' had received personal attention from the Son of Heaven, whose admiration was security for their preservation in the archives. This in itself was no mean triumph. The Chinese have a proverb which expresses the difficulty of bringing anything to the notice of those in high places: 'It is not easy for an honest official to escape the toils of treacherous underlings.'

Tu Fu writes a poem of thanks to the officials in charge of the Chi Hsien Yüan, and goes.

RECORD LEFT BEHIND, PRESENTED TO THE TWO SCHOLARS, TS'UI AND YÜ OF THE CHI HSIEN YÜAN

Vol. II, Leaf 5

In this luminous generation my hair will soon turn white;
My poverty-stricken road is blocked, therefore I cry aloud my grief before the Palace Portal.

The aura of my poems rose to the edges of stars and constellations;
My literary work moved the Honourable Imperial Ruler.

The Old Man of Heaven, himself, wrote the Heading of the Composition;
The Spring Examiners verified the text, they investigated and criticized its merits.

I hoped to lean on the wind, to pursue the Sea-bird's course;
Or, following the stream, to reach the Dragon's Gate.

After all, I was still associated with hornless dragons,
Although I heard but the joyful twitter of swallows and small fowl.

To-day I am cut off, am far from the Emperor who is my Heaven;
I rose high to His presence, but cannot now wheel in the air at will.

Verily it is difficult for my learning to rise;
Would that the resounding fame of my Clan might still exist!

* * *

At my old hill grow many medicinal herbs;
The triumphant beauty of the view recalls the Peach Blossom Fountain.

I wish to arrange return journey to my own country,
But will always treasure thoughts of the Hall in the Forbidden Enclosure.

The three *fu* which you complimented so mistakenly, are preserved;
It is difficult, my Lords, to express my obligation to you both.

PART VII

At the Hamlet of Tu

T'IEN PAO, TENTH REVOLUTION. A.D. 751

On leaving the Capital, Tu Fu returned for a time to the hamlet where his 'roots had been struck,' but found the people there much changed. In speaking of this period, as he does in 'Years of Strength Travel,' Tu Fu uses a peculiar idiom which I have heard a hundred times in current use to-day. Scholars in retirement who feel that administrative conditions are such that they cannot participate and yet preserve their honour, say, 'I will not allow my white coat to be splashed with black.'

Nothing pleased me: I withdrew my person,
Drank deeply, hiding honour, virtue.

My fur coat black; how avoid soiling it?
My hair streaked with white, I raised high the horn wine-cup.

At Tu Ch'ü, hamlet whence sprang my Clan, the greybeards, the old people, had changed;
In open spaces, to the Four Quarters, grew many white poplar trees.

To Chinese ears the rustle of poplars is a peculiarly mournful, dreary sound and one that but intensifies regret; and Tu Fu suffered from bitter regret.

News must have come promptly from the Capital but sixteen miles distant, and before long rumour had it that the hated Li Lin-fu was ill. Then in the Tenth Moon of T'ien Pao, eleventh revolution, came the news of his death. Within a month Yang Kuo-chung, cousin of the lovely favourite Yang Kuei-fei, had succeeded him as Minister of the Right.

A new era opened, everyone realized that; but hearts must have been heavy and doubts pervasive at the prospect which lay before the country. Kuo-chung, so the *T'ang History* says, was a person with no sense of right and wrong: even his kinsmen did not think him good. He had risen to power some years before, partly by virtue of his relationship to Kuei-fei, but largely as the result of financial aid given him by a certain Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung of Szechwan, who was extremely wealthy and who rose to a position of some importance through his association with Kuo-chung. When Kuo-chung was appointed Minister of the Right, Chung-t'ung arranged that a eulogy should be carved upon a stone tablet erected at the Palace Gate. The next poem in the *Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan* is the one Tu Fu presented to Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung in celebration of this occasion.

In spite of Yang Kuo-chung's reputation, men probably hoped that responsibility would develop his better side, and that the chariot of state might be more ably guided than heretofore, especially if he would but recognize and employ men of merit. This hope proved illusive. Palace intrigues became more involved, and Palace extravagance passed the bounds of decency. In 'Years of Strength Travel' Tu Fu says:

Imperial horses consumed spiked millet, beans and pulse;
Official fighting cocks took as tribute rice growing in fields, grain.
Lifting the corner, I saw much wasteful expenditure,
And grieving, realized that through the ages, prosperity raised by common accord had been succeeded by ruin and disaster.

PART VIII

The Rise of the Yang Clan

EARLY T'IEN PAO

The words 'lifting the corner' at the end of the last extract are a quotation from Confucius; he once remarked that a man who, if one corner of a subject were revealed, did not understand the whole, was not worth the teaching! Looking below the corner lifted day by day in Ch'ang An, one saw only too plainly that the once direct, simple and self-controlled Ming Huang was turning into a besotted old man, completely under the influence of 'lovely ladies.'

Yang Yü-huan, or Jade Armlet, known by the title Kuei-fei – exalted Imperial Concubine – remained favourite. According to the account in the *T'ang History*, which I will paraphrase, she was 'astute and perspicacious,' while 'her modest air and sidelong glances lifted Ming Huang to the clouds.' Her Palace nickname was 'the Supreme One,' and she was treated as an Empress, while her three beautiful and talented sisters were given titles coined from the names of States and, I may say, the revenue deriving from such *kuo* or States. The eldest was Han Kuo; then came Kuo Kuo, loveliest of the three, and finally Ch'in Kuo. To the horror of the Court, these ladies, although married women, accepted the attentions of the Emperor and went back and forth in the Palace as they pleased. Besides the sisters there were brothers in the Yang family who required, and obtained, Imperial assistance. Indeed, the 'Five Households of Yang' – that is, the establishments of the three sisters and the two brothers – became a byword in the Capital. The orders of these sycophants were obeyed with even greater celerity

than were the behests of the Emperor, and people from the Four Quarters who thronged their houses, begging favours and offering bribes, were 'even more numerous than the people who filled the market-place; the bustle and noise was overpowering.'

During T'ien Pao, Seventh Moon, Ming Huang and Kuei-fei had a serious difference and were both extremely angry. The exact cause is unimportant. Fallings-out are not unusual during the heat of Autumn, First Moon, which approximates to our August and which throughout China is very hot indeed. At all events, Ming Huang in his wrath banished Kuei-fei at the first crack of dawn to her elder brother's residence. He then sat down to reflect on what he had done. It was impossible for him

to touch food: he sat and brooded. At high noon Kao Li-shih, who knew his every mood, suggested in a subtle manner, 'Shall the things Kuei-fei used be sent to her?' The Son of Heaven acquiesced. Over a hundred carts were loaded with garments, furnishings, jewellery – all the thousand treasures the lady had valued; the Emperor sent a part of his own meal and the carts departed. 'At the time,' so states the *T'ang History*, 'nothing pleased the Emperor, so irritable was his mood.' All day long, the eunuchs posted at the Palace door, holding wooden implements ready to chastise anyone who displeased the Emperor, were kept busy, belabouring their fellows. The sound of blows rang ceaselessly, and all the attendants managed to acquire a share. By evening the Son of Heaven had worked himself into a most unheavenly

frenzy, and Kao Li-shih, feeling that a desperate remedy was called for, knelt before him and made the welcome suggestion that Kuei-fei return!

The gateway leading from the road of Peaceful Prosperity was opened for her entry. Bending her tall form to the ground, she humbly admitted her fault, and the Emperor, relieved in mind, patted and comforted her. The next day, the Ladies Han Kuo and Kuo Kuo offered up delicacies to Ming Huang who, refusing to receive his Ministers, spent the day in revel. All sorts of extravagant and unsuitable presents were lavished upon the eunuchs and ladies-in-waiting.

From this time the Imperial infatuation increased.

The three sisters were each allowed annually a thousand *kuan*, being a string of a thousand cash, for their toilet, their powder and their make-up, while the *chia ti*, or mansions of the Five Households, were altered to resemble palaces. The 'flowers of Yang,' as the ladies were called, became so capricious that if they saw any building which they admired, they insisted upon speedy alteration to their own quarters. As the history says: 'Every year, every moon, every day, every night, masons and carpenters never ceased to make improvements.' One house would cost a million *kuan*, precious articles received as tribute were showered upon the Five Households, and members of the Yellow Gate, as eunuchs are called, hurried back and forth perpetually with messages and gifts. In power, in wealth, in Imperial affection none could compare with those whose surname was 'Yang,' and amongst them none could compare with Kuei-fei. Within her palace were seven hundred women who wove brocade and embroidered silks, and several hundreds more who did carving and made articles of gold and silver. The palace itself was called P'êng Lai, after the abode of the Immortals in the Jade-grey Sea, while she herself was often referred to by the poets as the Hsi Wang Mu, Western Empress Mother, a fabulous being who rules in the Western Paradise.

The Lady Kuo Kuo, of a very independent nature, was a fine horsewoman, so the Emperor provided her

with a magnificent horse and a nice little eunuch to care for him. She scorned make-up, and appeared at Court very beautiful but pale and natural, wearing neither powder nor rouge. She and her sister, the Lady Han Kuo, arranged and settled the marriages of members of the Imperial Clan; as a result they were besieged by applicants who arrived before them, their purses bulging with silver and gold.

The extract from the *Chiu T'ang Shu*, which describes the lack of propriety shown by the Yang Clan, reads:

> Hsüan Tsung on each progress to Hua Ch'ing Kung, Palace of Glorious Purity, was accompanied by Kuo-chung, his elder sisters and younger sisters of the Five Households and their retinues. Each household consisted of one company wearing clothing of one colour. When the Five Households united their companies they glowed and shone like flowers. In

their abandon they dropped hair ornaments and threw off shoes. Their jades, crystals, pearls and kingfisher ornaments were resplendent, brilliant; as they passed sweet fragrance was wafted down the road.

Furthermore Kuo-chung who had secret relations with Kuo Kuo, did not avoid sharp wounds from the strong fox of suspicion.

Their saddle trappings pressed together, their chariots joined in a square, not using curtains or screens, the Five Households followed the Royal Progress to Hua Ch'ing, Palace of Glorious Purity.

From this can be estimated in what manner the Festival to Uproot Evil on Third Day, Third Moon, must have been like.

The curious expression 'in a square' used of boats or chariots means that two of the conveyances were lashed together, making what seemed one square vehicle.

During T'ien Pao, ninth revolution, Kuei-fei and the Emperor again fell out, and the lady was once more banished. Upon this occasion, a spy kept in the Palace by An Lu-shan intervened and begged that Kuei-fei might return to the Palace, even if she had a place but as large as a sitting-mat to die in; he declared that her sorrow was too great, and suggested also that the Emperor himself did not gain in dignity by discarding one whom he had held so dear. Ming Huang relented to the point of sending a gift of Imperial food to the grief-stricken lady by the hands of one Chang T'ao-kuan. Kuei-fei wept and said:

'The Unworthy One has been intractable before the face of the Enlightened One. Her faults deserve ten thousand deaths. Her robes, her apparel and all besides, are bestowed by the Grace of the Enlightened One: she has nothing to keep or bequeath. Her hair and flesh alone are from father and mother. With the sharp scissors she severs a tress of hair to offer up in expiation.'

Could mortal man withstand such an appeal? The Bright Emperor certainly could not. Kuei-fei returned, summoned in haste by Kao Li-shih, and the bonds of doting affection were once again tightened.

Thus the power of the Five Households grew, and when Yang Kuo-chung, their father's elder brother's son, became Minister, it was, as the French would say, *le comble*.

I have permitted myself so long a digression in regard to the rise of the Yang Clan for several reasons. Future tragic happenings had their main root in this abuse of power; furthermore, Tu Fu was greatly concerned by the terrible lack of propriety evidenced by the Enlightened One, and dreaded its effect upon public opinion.

But there is another and still stronger reason. The rise of the Yang Clan may be regarded, to use rather an elaborate simile, as the *rafflesia* bloom of the order 'nepotisaceæ,' which order, in China at least, produces blossoms ranging in size from *lemnas*, the smallest flower in the world, to *rafflesia*, which in the forests of Sumatra reaches a spread of three feet. I do not think that I should be guilty of too sweeping a statement, were I to say that nepotism has been for centuries, and is to-day, the curse of the Chinese social system; and although the educational and governmental systems, with their stabilizing forces, have now been swept away, the social system remains.

To return to the matter in hand: a favourite device of Chinese poets is to refer to untoward current events under a veil of allusion. Thus references to dissipation under the Han may generally be read as 'pricks' intended for the rulers of the day. So generally conceded is this method that even it is dangerous. Kao Li-shih, for instance,

was able to persuade Yang Kuei-fei that Li T'aipo in his Songs to the Peonies, which I have translated in *Fir-Flower Tablets*, intended to insult her by referring to the Flying Swallow, favourite of a Han Ruler who lived during the first century before our era. As a result Li T'ai-po was banished from the Court.

Tu Fu ran no such risk. He writes, ironically perhaps, of the Spring festivities of T'ien Pao, twelfth revolution, but perfectly politely.

DAZZLING LADIES: A HSING

Vol. II, Leaf 6

Third Moon, third day, Heaven's breath new;
Ch'ang An water's edge, many dazzling ladies.

Of gracious demeanour, far-reaching ambition,
and virtue moreover undeviating;
Their skin fine of grain, glossy and smooth; bones
and flesh well-proportioned.

Upper garments, lower garments, of embroidered
silk gauze, reflect gleaming light in the sunset
month of Spring;
It beats down on gold peacocks and silver Ch'i
Lin.

Upon their heads what is there?
Ornamental leaves made of kingfisher feathers
droop past the line of their lips from hair bound
on the temples.

Their backs behind, what can be seen?
Pearls pressing down loins, skirts hanging straight,
their bodies perfectly fitted.

Among the ladies are relations of the Cherished One
who lives behind the cloud screen in the
Spiced Plant Chamber;
Bestowed upon them are names of great Kingdoms,
Kuo as well as Ch'in.

Peaked hump of purple dromedary comes out
from kingfisher cauldron;
On crystal platter clear as water's essence, lie rows
of white and shining fish.

The ladies dislike to eat to repletion and not to put
down their rhinoceros horn chop-sticks fre-
quently;

Green fire-bird knife with tinkling bells cuts to a thread; the food is like strands of fine silk cord.

Members of the Yellow Gate fly as on wings, rein in their horses abruptly, but no dust rises from the polished paving stones;
Imperial kitchen lets fall in an unbroken line the eight delicacies sent as gifts.

(*The Emperor is supposed to dine on these delicacies, which are: bear's paws, deer's tails, duck's tongues, turbot's roe, camel's hump, monkey's lips, carp's tail and ox's marrow.*)

Pitiful sounds of flutes and drums bite the hearts of demons beneath and spirits above;
Distinguished visitors of official rank follow each other, a confused throng; a solid mass desire to cross the ferry.

Afterwards come the Yang Clan, riding horses; why do these hesitate and shrink back from the crowd?
The Yang, pushing through, reach the long summer house, dismount from steeds and step on flowered rugs.

Flowers of Yang, willow flowers, fall as snow, weighing down the white frogbit;
A black bird flies away, holding in his beak a rose-red handkerchief.

* * *

A hand held out to warm can scorch: his power and authority cut short comparison;
Be cautious: do not draw near, nor come in contact with the Ruling Minister's blustering rage.

Years later Tu Fu wrote many poems in reminiscence of these days. One group of eight is especially famous. The Empress Dowager, popularly known as the Old Buddha, admired them greatly – so I was told by Princess Der Ling, one of her ladies-in-waiting – and they certainly give a remarkable picture of the times. I quote two of these and several of another set written later still. As my motive in thus inserting them out of their order is largely historical, I shall interlace them with commentaries in the Chinese manner.

K'UN MING

Vol. XIII, Leaf 15

Pool of K'un Ming waters was dug in the days of Han;
Banners, flags, of Emperor Wu, float before my eyes.
Weaving Maiden on night of moon stands listless by her loom;
Stone leviathan in autumn wind rattles scaly shell.

On heaving billows a deep black cloud of Ku Mi seeds;
In cold dew, pink petals fall from lotus pods.
Hill barriers reach Heaven's edge; only a bird path;
I, the old fisherman, have floated on rivers, lakes, throughout the earth.

Commentary to lines 1 *and* 2

The K'un Ming was a pool measuring about thirteen miles in diameter which lay West of Ch'ang An. It had been dug in order

to give Han Wu Ti, who at that moment contemplated an expedition against the Southern tribes – an expedition that would entail fighting about the big lake in the country of K'un Ming, now Yünnan province – an opportunity to practise his men in naval warfare. On the pool sailed magnificent *lou ch'uan* or storied boats, 'ten times ten feet high,' and from these boats fluttered long flags.

In Ming Huang's day the K'un Ming became a pleasure resort. Stone statues of the Weaving Maid and the Oxherd, whose story I give in the glossary, stood one on either side of the pool, transforming it in imagination to the Silver River. There was also the figure of an immense fish with articulated tail, antennæ, gills and fringes, which responded with a fearsome sound to strong wind or peals of thunder.

OF OLD, LONG AGO

Vol. XVII, Leaf 4

Of old, long ago, from within Green Gate
Of P'êng Lai Palace, Imperial Insignia often filed;

Sweeping forward to greet proud peony flowers and blossoms of flowering trees,
While happy dragons rose from pool of peace.

As sun dropped to earth, Above Lord, dallying with Empress Mother,
Sat in breeze wafted from garments of 'Younger Sister.'

Mystery surrounds Imperial revels at Palace heart:
Few there were of outer people who knew.

Commentary to lines 2, 3 *and* 4

Peony flowers, a speciality of Lo Yang, were carefully cultivated in the Palace grounds; Ming Huang had four especially fine plants which were placed in front of the Aloes Wood Pavilion to the East

of the pool in the Hsing Ch'ing Kung. The flowers bloomed when peach and pear blossoms were at their height, and then the Son of Heaven, preceded by his Imperial Insignia and accompanied by Kuei-fei, he riding the famous horse Shine White in the Night and she sitting in a *pu lien* or Palace chair, often went to see them.

It is but natural that the Palace of P'êng Lai, which bore the name of that region where Immortals are at home, should be associated with legend and myth. Apparently it was quite usual for little dragons, hornless dragons, to come out of the pool at Hsing Ch'ing Kung and disport themselves in the Imperial Canal, a sight which enthralled the inhabitants of the Palace.

Commentary to line 5

I have often mentioned the visit which the Hsi Wang Mu is supposed to have made to the Han Emperor Wu Ti. It is reported that when she ordered her fairy attendants to prepare the Dragon Chariot for her departure, Wu Ti, in his efforts to detain her, rose from his throne and actually performed the *k'o t'ou* before her: that is, he knocked his Imperial head upon the ground! Ming Huang's behaviour to Kuei-fei is reminiscent of this untoward event.

Commentary to line 6

Chao Fei-yen, the Flying Swallow, and her elder sister, springing from a despised *milieu* – their brother, with whom they wandered about singing and dancing, was a professional boxer – became the powerful but unworthy favourites of Han Chêng Ti. Fei-yen, who was minute and amazingly graceful, performed the *wu* posturing dance to perfection. One day she was entertaining the Emperor with a song accompanied by Fêng Wu-fang, an official who provided music on the *shêng*. Inspired by her own singing, she suddenly rose and began to perform a *wu*. As her long sleeves rose and fell, as her lithe body bent and straightened itself, she chanted the words: 'Rise, *hsi-i-i*; rise to immortality, *hsi-i-i*; the old goes out and the new comes in.' At this point the Emperor, in an ecstasy,

commanded Wu-fang to lift her in the air; so, slipping his hand beneath the lady's tiny foot, the official raised her on his palm, she singing and posturing the while.

Allusions to this occurrence are very frequent in Chinese poetry, but Tu Fu suggests still another story in line six, one that I will not stop to tell; it points the fact that although Kuei-fei's sisters had suitable husbands, they were yet favourites of the Emperor. A commentator sagely remarks: if Tu Fu had said that Yang Kuei-fei kept An Lu-shan in her private apartments and that Ming Huang kept her sisters in the Palace, not only would the words be such as should not be uttered by an official of the Emperor but there would have been no poem: therefore Tu Fu must convey his reproof by means of allusion.

GIFTED PAINTER

Vol. XVII, Leaf 5

The gifted painter was Mao Yen-shou;
The *t'ou hu* player, Kuo the Jester;

Each grateful for the favour of Heaven's smile
Which brings back, to all living things, the Spring.

He governs, he institutes reform; peaceful opportunity is a flat, wide sea;
In his clear intelligence the Emperor gives judgment like a Divine Spirit.

He uses from time to time the Great Wrestlers,
But is not bemused with wind and dust of battle.

Commentary to lines 1 *and* 2

As usual Tu Fu refers to people of the day under the names of those who may be considered their prototypes in earlier times. The painter Mao Yen-shou was a favourite of Han Yüan Ti, until he wrecked his career, and in so doing ended his life, by painting a false portrait of Wang Chao-chün (see *Fir-Flower Tablets*).

Han Kan, the great painter of horses, and Fêng Shao-chêng, noted for his skill in drawing falcons, were both favourites of Ming Huang.

Kuo the Shê Jên, noted for his skill at *t'ou hu*, a game which consists of throwing arrows into a bronze jar, also lived under the Han; but at Ming Huang's Court, the game was well played by Huang P'iao, a dwarf. The Bright Emperor, who was devoted to him, called him the *jou chi* or 'flesh elbow-rest.'

Commentary to line 3

The smile of Heaven is the Imperial smile. Kuo the Shê Jên delighted the Han Emperor by playing the game with an arrow made of bramble instead of bamboo, so when he threw it, although it attained the mark, it sprang back and he, deftly catching it in its flight, threw it again, continuing thus for 'a hundred times.' Han Wu Ti, thrilled by his skill, presented him with money and silk.

Commentary to line 7

The *ti hsi* were gigantic wrestlers, corresponding to the Japanese *su mo* of to-day, who competed with their huge bodies bare. The first match was held in the Yüan Fêng period of Han, – about 112 B.C. People thronged to watch. The country was at peace, and although the Emperor enjoyed such things, he governed well and gave satisfaction – the primary duty of Heaven's Son.

FIGHTING COCKS

Vol. XVII, Leaf 5

The Above One bestowed brocade gifts upon the
Marshal of Fighting Cocks;
Horses performed posturing dances, were skilled at
climbing flights of steps.

From behind reed blinds Palace Women came forth;
In front of the pavilion musical phrases composed by the Emperor rang out.

These mysterious airs, learned on his journey to fairy regions, are ended;
For a long time past no fragrance has been wafted from daughters of joy.

Still, silent, Li Mountain road;
In clear autumn, grass, trees, yellow.

Commentary to line 1

Since early youth Ming Huang had greatly enjoyed cock-fighting, and before he became Heir-Apparent had been in the habit at the Season of Clear Brightness of leaving the Palace *incognito* to watch the people fight their birds. After his accession he kept hundreds of fighting cocks in special enclosures at both Capitals – and beautiful cocks they were: feet like iron; feathers gleaming with gold and lovely colours; combs high and red; their tails rising in magnificent curves. Five hundred young soldiers were deputed to care for them. One day the Emperor saw a certain Chia Ch'ang manipulating a wooden cock with such skill that the toy seemed alive. Highly amused, Ming Huang placed the young man in charge of the soldiers who tended the birds and bestowed upon him 'gold and silks.' People called Chia Ch'ang the 'Inspired Cock Youth.'

Commentary to line 2

The Bright Emperor was passionately fond of horses. In his stables the beasts were divided into two groups: the *lung* or dragon group, and the *chiao* or proud group, the 'proud' horses being over six feet in height. Over four hundred of these steeds were schooled to perform all manner of tricks, executing them rhythmically in time to the music provided by a band of youths dressed in primrose garments. The horses, too, were 'dressed,' that is, they were covered with silk nets, and the meshes of these nets were not fashioned in ordinary squares – by no means: they took the shapes of lovely flowers. Golden bells hung from the martingales, while jade and large pearls were braided into the flowing manes. Thus accoutred,

the horses, ridden by skilful horsemen, performed. When the strains of the air 'The Overturned Platter' rang out, the creatures, curvetting in time to the music, heads, tails and feet moving in perfect rhythm, moved forward; mounted tiers of wooden steps; performed 'posturing dances' holding in their teeth cups full of the 'wine of longevity'; or executed high jumps over stands three tiers high. Or again, a horse took his place in the centre of an immense wooden tub, which strong men lifted to their shoulders while the horse swayed to the beat of the musical instruments. All this and much more did the Bright Emperor and his ladies witness, when, on the Son of Heaven's birthday, called the Feast of a Thousand Autumns, they assembled in the Ch'in Chêng Lou, the storied building of Diligent Government.

Besides the poems written in a reminiscent vein, Tu Fu wrote several long *hsing* and *ko* on the theme of the Imperial horses. Space forbids that I quote them all. Successive Sons of Heaven have treasured famous steeds whose names have come down in history, and in whose veins the blood of dragons is supposed to have coursed. Mu Wang, who is alleged to have visited the Hsi Wang Mu in the Western Paradise, had a team of eight magnificent beasts. One, a white with yellow ears, was named quite simply 'yellow ears,' but the magnificent bright bay with black mane and tail, driven on the off-side of the team, was called Hua Liu, the Glorious Red Horse, and his name is often used figuratively as Tu Fu uses it in this poem. In addition to actual horses, legend is busy with the names of supernatural creatures, like Yao Niao who could travel ten thousand *li* a day. The names of noted horse-breeders have also come down to us; most famous of all that of Po Lo, who lived centuries before our era, and honourable among them is that of Chang Ching-shun in Ming Huang's employ. It is recorded that when, in the first year of K'ai Yüan, he took charge of the stables, the Imperial stud numbered twenty-four ten

thousands; that under his skilful management, by K'ai Yüan thirteenth year, the twenty-four had become forty-three ten thousands. In the following poem Tu Fu is thinking of more than horses; as a matter of fact, officials are often referred to as the 'Emperor's horses,' and Tu Fu feels that outstanding men are no longer given opportunity although they *must* still exist.

A SONG OF THE FLEET HORSES IN THE SON OF HEAVEN'S STUD

Vol. II, Leaf 18

I hear the Son of Heaven's horses can gallop
a thousand *li*;
Is this painted picture not of these?

How full of life! how noble! finer than all
others;
This fine beast swishes but the tip of his tail: it
is the sound of rising North wind.

His hair dappled grey, two ears yellow;
Eyes with a purple glow, sunk in square
sockets.

Swift, swift, of the dragon's nature; he is among
those which have been transformed;
His dragon bones stand out; see his extended
gallop.

* * *

When formerly the Great Charioteer Chang
Ching-shun
Superintended the stud, he selected carefully, in
breeding colts, good dams and large sires;

Then commanded the Chief Groom to house them in the Son of Heaven's stable;
The offspring of these noble steeds were divided off and fed separately: he treasured them as supernatural chargers.

At that time were forty times ten thousand horses,
But the able Chang sighed; he declared their quality had utterly deteriorated.

Therefore he painted a single model which he circulated among the people of the country,
Which would seem ever fresh as it hung before their eyes.

This was many years ago, the horse is dead; useless are his form and shadow;
Alas! we regret his unflagging hoofs; there is no way to extend him in a gallop!

* * *

At the present time are there no horses like the fabulous Yao Niao or the famous bay Hua Liu?
To-day no Wang Liang, no Po Lo? such men are dead and turned to dust!

PART IX

Excursions about the Capital

LATE T'IEN PAO

The poem following the *hsing* of the 'Dazzling Ladies' in the *Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan* is called: 'Sighing for the Sweet Chrysanthemums in the Front Courtyard.' 'Does Madam Ai know the sweet chrysanthemum?' enquired Mr. Nung as we read the title. 'I suppose it is a *pi fang*, a figure of speech,' I replied. 'Not at all,' was his answer; 'sweet chrysanthemums are very different from those one ordinarily sees; they are useful in cases of hot illnesses; they also make an excellent wash for the eyes, and the infusion is a delicious drink. The best come from Hang-chow.' Number-two Boy was hastily dispatched to purchase the minute yellow blooms, and from that day the hours of translation were punctuated, as the clock struck eleven, by sweet chrysanthemum tea served in cups from the Imperial dinner-service which I was fortunate enough to acquire some years ago. The straw-coloured drink is delicious, but I think its flavour was enhanced for me by the thought that I was sipping the self-same potion that Tu Fu had sipped so long ago. It made a liquid link, if I may so express it, down the centuries. The poem itself I do not find especially interesting, although the Chinese admire its subtlety.

Whether the 'front courtyard' was at the Hamlet of Tu, or somewhere in Ch'ang An itself, we have no means of knowing, but the next poem deals with the friendship which had grown up between Tu Fu and Chêng Ch'ien, for whom the office of Kuang Wên had been created, and was written in the spring of the next year, probably at Ch'ang An. Chêng Ch'ien, as I have stated in his bio-

吳友如畫寶 古今人物圖 六 第一集第下冊

graphy, was highly talented as a painter and poet, but quite incapable of consecutive work in other directions. He and Tu Fu went together during the hot weather to visit General Ho, a most congenial host whose beautiful garden lay in the hills South of the Capital. Ten poems deal with this excursion, but I shall not quote them all. In one of those omitted Tu Fu refers to an old custom of drinking wine through the stem of a lotus leaf. The leaf itself forms a cup; a little hole is pierced just above the stem and then the wine trickles down the hollow stalk to lips held ready for its reception. In this way the 'scent' of the leaf is enjoyed. A song inspired by wine is addressed to Chêng Ch'ien.

I ACCOMPANY CHÊNG THE KUANG WÊN ON A STROLL TO THE HILL FOREST OF GENERAL HO

Vol. II, Leaf 8

I

I did not know the road by the Southern Embankment;
I now realize it is at the Fifth Bridge.

The famous garden lies beside pellucid waters;
Wild bamboos rise to the blue sky.

Scholars met in olden days at the mouth of Ku Valley;
And learned men were invited together to the Hamlet of Hao Liang.

My life long I have found inspiration in lonely places;
I care not how far my horse's hoofs must travel.

II

Wind sweeps over deep pool which measures a hundred times one hundred *mou*;
Summer is still among tall trees which count a thousand stems and more.

Low boughs droop over flowers which ripen seed,
Dense leaves obscure bright oriole's nest.

Fresh bream provide silver-thread mince,
Fragrant herbs furnish jade-coloured soup.

Sitting below high poop of pleasure boat, I suddenly imagine
That I am voyaging in heart of Yüeh, eating my evening meal.

IV

Tall bamboos grow beside, touch, the little hut;
Late flowers clamber over frail reed fence.

By the whirlpool deep enough to drown a horse, lies a mill-stone;
Tendrils from the creeper coil like sleeping snakes.

The good work in my *tz'ŭ*, my *fu*, is without reward;
Hill forest is not far off.

I will take up my writings, records, sell them all,
And come to ask you for the Eastern Home.

V

This excess of waters must have overflowed from a great river;
These many hills were surely created with the Chieh Shih Mountains.

A green bamboo shoot droops, snapped by the wind;
A red-ripe plum bursts, rent by the rain.

I use a silver finger-guard to pluck the brass strings of my *chêng*;
I come, having exchanged my gold fish-badge for wine.

My spirits rise, I have moved here; there is no sprinkling and sweeping;
I can do as I wish: I sit on the lichens and moss.

VI

Wind on the ridge blows what seems snow from the shadow;
At Cloud Gateway roars a whirlpool made by falling water.

I rouse myself from dreaming after wine and think of my bamboo sleeping-mat;
My clothes are cold, I need a padded bed-quilt.

The Old Man of the Wilds comes to see me, his guest;
In the river are fish, no need to fetch money.

I imagine that so pure and unspoilt a place
Exists only among his hills and by his streams.

IX

Books on the bed piled high as the house;
Trees growing before the steps brushing the clouds.

The General in the army does not like uncultivated fighting men;
His little sons are most intelligent, they write essays.

We wake after drinking wine: a light breeze blows through the room,
And we listen to poems in the silent midnight.

Shadows of wistaria tendrils hang on our grass-cloth robes,
And the chilly moonlight is a confused mass of white.

X

My thoughts in solitude are suddenly not mournful:
It is the moment for me to return home; what remedy is there? – none!

I go out from the door; the flowing water comes to rest in the pool;
I turn my head; white clouds are many.

I laugh to myself; I perform a posturing dance in front of the lamp;
Who likes the song I sing after I am drunk?

Yet it should be good to my friend:
I will come again, even in wind or rain.

SONG INSPIRED BY WINE

Vol. II, Leaf 7

Robed, robed, the hosts of Ministers who ascend Terraces and live in guarded places;
Official residence of the Kuang Wên, the great scholar, is cold, solitary.

Many, many, the storied houses where they scorn fine grain and tender meat;
Daily food of the Kuang Wên, the great scholar, is not sufficient for his needs.

Great Scholar has principles which reach beyond the principles of the Emperor I;
Great Scholar has talents superior to the talents of Ch'ü Yüan or Sung Yü.

His virtue is the highest of the generation, yet often he is caught on the wheel of disappointment, or falls into a pit of disaster;
What avails his intelligence, his fame, which should ring down ten thousand ages?

* * *

People often laugh at the traveller from Tu Ling who lives in the wilds;

Who wears a short, tight, coarse cloth coat, whose hair is like raw silk thread.

Daily I buy rice at the Government Granaries: five pints of rice!
Sometimes I say to old Chêng, whose feelings, whose aims are like my own:

'I have money; I immediately seek you out,
'And without a moment's hesitation purchase wine.

'I disregard formality towards you and yours;
'Let us drink deep; you are in truth my teacher!'

Deep, deep, in the purity of a Spring night we pour out wine;
The lamp shines on fine rain, on flowers dropping from the eaves.

Only aware that our loud songs are inspired by demons and spirits,
Do we know that we shall die of hunger, that our bodies will serve to level drains and ditches?

Hsiang Fu himself, with his exceptional talents, washed wine cups;
Son of the Clouds, expert calligraphist, finally threw himself from a belvedere.

In his early years the poet composed 'Going Out from Office to Return Home,'
To rocky fields, a grass hut, a stretch of green moss.

Alas, of what use is the learning to which I have attained!
The Son of the K'ung Clan,[1] the Brigand, Tao Chih, are dust, dirt!

It is not necessary to hear this; thoughts are sad, hearts are wounded;
What will we meet in life before us – still is the wine cup held to our lips!

So charmed was he by General Ho and his garden that Tu Fu pays a second visit in the autumn and writes five poems, which I quote and in conjunction add the description of an outing to the West of the City and a poem written in jest to Chêng Ch'ien.

A REPEATED VISIT TO THE HO CLAN

Vol. II, Leaf 10

I

I enquired categorically for the bamboos by the East Bridge,
And have a written report from the General of the Army.

I throw on my clothes and command my chariot; I return
To sleep on the high pillow in what seems my own little hut.

Flowers droop, an oriole seizes a butterfly;
Stream clamours, an otter pursues a fish.

[1] The Son of the K'ung Clan is the Sage whom we call Confucius.

I come again; I rest in this favoured place
Where I can live the life of a man in the wilds.

II

Rain in the hills; our flagon as usual is here;
Sand washes down; we do not move our benches.

The dog meets me as a guest who has often passed the night;
The crow guards its nestling fallen from the nest.

Thin clouds cover Ts'ui Wei Temple;
Sky clears after rain over Huang Tzŭ slope.

A while past inspiration of solitude rose to its extremity;
Pacing on wooden clogs, I went beyond the plaited bamboo fence to the East.

III

On the level terrace, as the sun sinks,
Sipping new tea in the season of Spring wind.

Sitting sideways against the stone balustrade, I dip my writing brush in ink,
And write poems on *wu t'ung* leaves.

On the bamboo clothes-rack a kingfisher calls;
On the silk fishing-line a dragonfly lights.

Now inspiration begotten by solitude burns within me;
I also come, go, without constraint.

IV

It is most curious, the military official is lazy about his attendance at Court;
He must be addicted to the pleasure of long residence in the wilds.

Rain scatters gold rings for the mesh of his cuirass;
Green moss provides deep colour for the handle of his spear.

With his own hand he moves the roots of willow-coloured reeds;
His household can rely on sufficient rice, grown in their own fields.

I see how my Lord uses his ideas born in solitude;
The peace of his white days equals that of Hsi Huang.

V

Arrived in this place, I rejoice to pass many nights;
My host detains me until we have halved the year.

But I have erred, have mistaken the season, by every appearance it is the sunset of autumn;
Disappointed, I look longingly at the spring in the forest which I love.

On that day when Imperial grace bestows upon me a trifling emolument,
I will return to the hills and buy a little field.

This journey will possibly not eventuate:
I grasp the wine flagon; my thoughts float in vacuity.

MOORED IN A BOAT BY THE BANKS, WEST OF THE CITY

Vol. II, Leaf 13

Blue-black moth eyebrows, gleaming white teeth
assemble on high-roofed pleasure boat;
Horizontal flutes, short flageolets, breathe
plaintive sounds to far-off sky.

Ivory mast is slack; it sways at will in Spring
wind;
Decorated hawser is taut; we loiter at leisure
late in the day.

Girls sing and waft their fans, whose shadows on the tiny waves seem fish rising to breathe;
Maidens perform posturing dances; flower petals, loosened by the feet of swallows, fly; they drop on a bamboo mat laid ready for the feast.

Were there not a little boat easily propelled by oars,
Could a hundred flagons be served – could wine gush like a spring?

WRITTEN IN JEST TO CHÊNG CH'IEN THE KUANG WÊN. PRESENTED ALSO TO SU THE SSŬ YEH

Vol. II, Leaf 18

The Kuang Wên reaches Official Residence
And ties his horse below steps of Great Hall.

Because he is drunk, he returns riding a horse,
And has met many officials, his superiors, who have cursed him roundly.

His talents have been famous for three tens of years,
Yet his wanderer's seat is cold, lacking even its felt mat.

To rely on, he has Su the Ssŭ Yeh,
And daily, daily, begs round coins for wine.

Among all Tu Fu's friends, none was more brilliant than Ts'ên Ts'an, the *chin shih*. The 'scholar who has entered learning' is the exact rendering of the title given to men who take this high degree; and if Tu Fu's de-

scription of an excursion to the Mei Pei, of which I quote all but the closing and very allusive lines, is to be believed, Ts'ên Ts'an must have been of an adventurous spirit.

The Mei Pei, or the slopes of Mei, had once been a part of the Shang Lin Park founded by the Emperor Wu of Han, and had been carefully preserved ever since. The people were not allowed to cut the trees nor to take fish from its waters. Tu Fu goes there frequently.

THE MEI PEI HSING

Vol. II, Leaf 13

Ts'ên Ts'an, my younger brother, always likes what is unusual;
He leads me by the hand, we come far, we wander to Mei Pei.

Heaven, Earth, suddenly change colour; it turns extremely dark;
Waves, billows, over a myriad *ch'ing* of space are piled, a glassy, lustrous mass.

Into this glassy, lustrous mass, stretching to infinity, the little boat floats;
It is a preposterous business; when elation reaches its zenith, sorrowful thoughts must come.

A huge tortoise, possibly a long whale, will swallow us: we will never know anything more!
Wicked wind! white waves! I sigh! how shall we arrive?

* * *

Our host takes observations; he is able to open
out the embroidered sail;
The boat men rejoice greatly, there is no longer
mist and spray.

Wild duck, widgeon, are dotted here and there;
the oarsmen sing folk-songs;
Notes from strings and flutes murmur *chao chiu!*
kingfisher green lies reflected on the calm
expanse.

The bamboo pole is immersed, it reaches the tips
of sunken grasses; the depth cannot be fath-
omed;
Caltrop leaves, lotus blossoms, shine as though
polished.

We are hidden in the midst of flowing waters
on the clear wide inlet;
We turn to come back, the black shadow of
Chung Nan descends; it blots out the water's
edge.

Half the slope together with the Southern
Mountain lies uniform in colour, mirrored on
the water;
The shadow moves, slides, undulates, on the
rippling flowing waves.

The gunwale of our boat shatters the dark edge
of the reflected temple at Yün Chi Peak;
On the surface of the water the moon comes
through Lan Tien Pass.

Tu Fu was evidently living in a very humble cottage on the outskirts of the Capital, and here he welcomed

friends to the best of his poor ability, which ability was however supplemented by the generosity of neighbours in truly Chinese fashion. The borrowing which he mentions reminds me of my own experiences in China. It was quite an understood thing, for instance, that my silver should embellish the table of offerings at village festivals, while Number-two Boy, who has a very handsome altar set in lovely old pewter, frequently lent it to me.

A SUMMER DAY: SIR LI SEEKS ME OUT

Vol. II, Leaf 18

In distant forest, breath of heat grows less;
My Lord strolls across to visit me.

My poverty-stricken dwelling is in a walled village,
Entered through a side-lane at South gate-tower of the city.

Neighbouring cottagers are simple honest people,
Therefore it is easy to ask for what I need.

I call to the people in the house adjoining on the West:
'Pray, may I ask, have you wine or not?'

Over the wall-head passes unstrained wine thick with sediment;
I unroll the mat; we bend over a long expanse of flowing water.

Light breezes come from left, from right;
Guest fancies he is startled by autumn.

Nests are many; birds all fight;
Leaves are thick; innumerable cicadas clamour.

It is mortifying that the din of these creatures should occur;
Who can say my hut is secluded?

Evening; flowers; colour of water pure;
It satisfies; my guest stays; he tarries long.

Perhaps the flagon is not yet empty,
But I rise and consider how to obtain more wine for my Lord.

With the autumn of T'ien Pao, thirteenth revolution, came dreadful floods. Fang Kuan, of whom more later, sent a report to the Emperor, but Yang Kuo-chung suppressed it. This being a simple method of making affairs run smoothly, it came to be one in frequent use among officials. Therefore the Emperor led his life in blissful ignorance of what the people suffered. Food became so scarce that 'a measure of rice would buy a bride.'

BEWAILING AUTUMN RAIN

THREE STANZAS

Vol. II, Leaf 15

I

Drenched in autumn rain, one hundred plants rot, die;
Below the steps, however, your colour, *chüeh ming*, is fresh.

Bright fine leaves crowd your stalk, feathery,
grass-like, kingfisher green;
Your flowers in bloom, yellow gold like coins,
are few.

Cold wind blows *hsiao! hsiao!* you are in
extremity;
I fear in days to come even you will find
difficulty in surviving.

In the Hall above am I, student of writings, my
head turned white to no purpose;
As the wind whistles, I look down anxiously and
inhale through my tears your fragrance from
afar.

II

Destructive wind, ceaseless autumn rain falls
fên fên!
The Four Seas, the Eight Wastes unite in one
cloud.

A horse departing, an ox approaching cannot
be told apart;
The muddy Ching River, the clear Wei, how
distinguish one from the other?

Heads of grain ripe for harvest show sprouts;
spikes of panicled millet are black;
But we have no news or tidings of young men
who till the soil or of field fathers.

In the city a measure of rice is bartered for a bride, her quilts and coverlets;
She and her betrothed are willing between them to determine the price.

III

Who can reckon how many cotton-clad people in Ch'ang An
Are locked behind their humble doors, patching the mud walls of their huts lest they melt?

The old man does not go out through the long grass and weeds,
But the little boys, without a care, paddle about in wind and rain.

Sound of rain *sou! sou!* mingles with northerly wind hastening early cold;
Wings of the wild goose are wet; high flight is difficult.

Since autumn came not once have we seen the white sun;
The mud is filthy! on what day will Empress Earth be dry?

The festival of Chung Yang, Repeated Yang, which falls on the Ninth Day of the Ninth Moon, was rainy this year, and Tu Fu was not able to celebrate it as he would have liked. It is still one of the most popular festivals in China; I always eat crabs and admire yellow chrysanthemums myself on that day, although I have never 'stuck' the yellow-gold flowers in my hair, which is the correct thing to do.

Vol. II, Leaf 14

I go out from the door, I come in at the door again:
Still rain sweeps in showers as before.

Where I tread, mud squelches *kua! kua!*
Thinking of my Lord makes me thin.

As I sit in the Western corridor, chanting in a low voice,
It is so dark that I cannot distinguish food from drink; nor high noon from yellow dusk.

To Crooked River head, a step but an inch in length,
Yet for us it is difficult to approach each other.

Alas! Woe the day! what of the people's livelihood?
Sheaves, grain ready for the sickle, can not be saved.

How shall we reprimand the Cloud Spirit?
Who else is able to repair the leak of Heaven?

The great shining lights, the sun, the moon, are hidden;
In the wild wastes birds and beasts cry.

Those in high places are forced to follow devious paths;
Humble people are reduced to beggary by toil and care.

To the South rise towering Hills;
Perhaps they will be immersed and float off on the stream.

It is the Festival of Repeated Yang: chrysanthemums beside my East fence
Are set out in groups; for whom will they unfold?

Sir Ts'ên has many new poems;
His nature resembles mine, he loves to drink thick wine.

Stick in hair, stick in hair the yellow gold flowers!
What do they avail, filling the sleeve of a robe?

During this, the thirteenth revolution of T'ien Pao, the Emperor renewed the appointment of Hua Shan, or Flowery Mountain, as Peak of the West. This was an elaborate ceremony carried out by each dynasty, and had so far been neglected by the T'ang. Tu Fu offered up a *fu* upon this occasion, but we have no further details of his doings until T'ien Pao makes its fourteenth revolution, and then – his official rank is suddenly determined! I say 'is suddenly determined' because there is no record of the steps which led to this result. It is possible that representations from his many friends and relations in official life brought about a recommendation to the throne that Tu Fu be employed.

He was first offered the post of Wei in Ho Hsi, the District West of the river, but possibly remembering Kao Shih's experience, refused, and was then appointed to the position of a Shuai Fu in the Heir Apparent's household.

The rank was far from elevated, but at long last Tu Fu, now in his forty-fourth year, had become an official of the Empire!

MY OFFICIAL RANK IS DETERMINED, WHEREUPON I ADDRESS MYSELF IN JEST

Vol. III, Leaf 2

I will not accept office as Ho Hsi Wei,
I should be obliged to bend my loins in bleak, stark misery.

The honourable old man fears being hurried hither and thither;

Moreover, a Shuai Fu can stroll about at leisure.

I enjoy wine, therefore a trifling emolument is a necessity;
I sing mad songs, commissioned by a perfectly enlightened dynasty.

All thought of returning home to my old hills in prosperity is ended:
I sigh and turn my head towards the fair wind which should waft me to my far-off friends.

PART X

The Breath of Killing on the North-East Border

T'IEN PAO, FOURTEENTH REVOLUTION. A.D. 755

If the Son of Heaven was living in ignorance of floods, of defeats on the southern frontiers and of danger from the T'u Fan who grew steadily in strength, and if he was oblivious of the threat in the North-east, where An Lu-shan was in charge of the district which now includes Peking, his subjects did not share his tranquil ignorance. News from Chi Mên, the Thistle Gate, near present-day Peking, was ominous, and the tales told of Lu-shan's arrogance next to unbelievable.

Tu Fu writes a group of five poems, supposed to fall from the lips of a conscript, which deal with the situation, but which describe the glitter of a military life rather than its bitterness.

The first deals with the conscript's departure and mentions his leave-taking when 'sweet food' is served to the men on the road. I describe the Bill-hook of Wu in the glossary. The second poem appears in *Fir-Flower Tablets*; the third suggests that An Lu-shan, in spite of his meritorious services, which lay in conquering the frontier tribes and turning them into disconnected or 'orphan hosts,' had some ulterior motive. Otherwise why should he collect horses by the ten thousand? Why provide himself from Wu, the present-day Kiangsu, still the great granary of the country, with vast quantities of rice?

The victories and triumphs spoken of in poem four are taken to refer to two definite occasions. In T'ien Pao, fourth revolution, Lu-shan advanced to reduce the tribes

of Hsi and of Ch'i Tan, from which he himself had sprung, in the far North-east. In the Eighth Moon, he asked the leaders of each to come and drink wine with him; they accepted his hospitality with but too great enthusiasm. In fact they both became drunk, whereupon Lu-shan promptly ordered that they be decapitated. The heads were sent, a gruesome gift, to the Palace. Nine years later, as the difficulties with these tribes still continued, he fought them again, seizing their Princes, and in the Fourth Moon of T'ien Pao, fourteenth revolution, was able to report that both Ch'i Tan and Hsi were defeated. Naturally the Emperor rejoiced, and being the impetuous enthusiast that he was, agreed as naturally to reward the men whom Lu-shan recommended. The *T'ang History* states that five hundred of his henchmen were appointed generals, and three thousand individuals of lesser rank were given some acknowledgment of their services. Thus, as Tu Fu says:

'The soil at Yü Yang brought forth bold heroes.'

And these silk-clad heroes were all indebted to Lu-shan for preferment. He himself had risen by successive steps to the position of a Wang or Prince, and his insolence passed all bounds. History relates that he refused to obey the regulations which prescribed that he should go forth, meet, and perform the *k'o t'ou* before an Imperial messenger; that he refused indeed to see the messenger, making some paltry excuse of illness to justify his insulting behaviour to the bearer of words from Heaven, that is, the Emperor. All this was common knowledge within the walls of the Forbidden City, and as one commentator remarks, there is no doubt that Ming Huang in his blindness lighted the fires of disaster himself.

Vol. II, Leaf 3

I

A man child born into the world
Aspires, when he reaches the age of strength and vigour, to be created a Military Official.

The felling down, the clash and cry of battle, bring rewards of merit, patrimony;
How then stay to guard one's own old hill?

Summoned to serve, to go to Thistle Gate,
The army moves; I may not delay.

A thousand ounces of gold for trimming of a horse saddle;
A hundred ounces of gold for carving on a sword hilt.

People of the hamlet take leave as I go;
On the wide road, relatives, kinsmen, surround and press upon me.

In ranks of honour, facing South, stand the elders whose black hair is streaked with white;
They offer wine to inebriate, fermented spirits, and an abundance of sweet food.

Youths whose years are few, also bring gifts,
And laugh aloud when they see the Bill-hook of Wu.

III

To guard the frontier was of supreme importance
to men of olden days;
To obtain high rank is the weighty question for
men of to-day.

Is it conceivable that our Heroic, Vigorous Ruler
Sends out innumerable soldiers, reaching every-
where, a long extended cloud?

At the Six Units the people are already one
household;
Moreover, the Barbarians in the Four Quarters
are orphan hosts.

To satisfy his martial ardour, the Emperor calls upon
the Leopard, the Tiger Troops;
Their courageous bodies respond impetuously
to his appeal.

Drawing two-edged swords, in desolate desert,
to defeat enemy,
They daily collect herds of Mongol horses.

They swear to open the black sun-covered North,
To seize it, to offer it as a gift to our Great Lord.

IV

Victories follow on; succeeding each other day by
day are offered to our Lord;
The allied hosts of Hsi and Ch'i Tan are still; nor
need they be reckoned with.

The soil at Yü Yang brings forth bold heroes;
Drums roll; reed-pipes, flageolets sound on the air.

Sail clouds pass over Liao Sea,
Laden with *kêng* rice, pearl rice, from East Wu.

Openwork silk gauze from Yüeh, as well as pure white silk of Ch'u,
Shine bright on the backs of chair-bearers and low menials.

The Chief of Generals pours increase on his high position;
Arrogant, overbearing, he insults the Above Lord.

Men at the Frontier dare not criticize;
Those who criticize die at the point where roads meet.

V

A descendant rooted in a clan of good repute, I
Was forced out to join the army, where there are many different grades.

An arrogant leader can increase sad autumn thoughts which surge into the heart;
The value of a body is not of sufficient importance to be mentioned.

For twice ten years I have leapt to my horse,
But now fear to betray the Grace and Mercy of the Bright Lord.

The Yo Chou cavalry whom I see
Urging their horses along the Yellow River to the East Capital, herald dusk for the Imperial sun.

By a small and lonely pathway, in the heart of night, I come home:
Where formerly stood a village of five and twenty households, is now a deserted hamlet.

By good fortune I have avoided, escaped, the evil name of traitor;
Poverty-stricken, old, I have neither sons nor grandsons.

PART XI

Journey to the District of Fêng Hsien

T'IEN PAO, FOURTEENTH REVOLUTION. A.D. 755

Life in the Official Residence of the Heir Apparent did not prove attractive, nor did Tu Fu stay there many Moons. In an ironical little *hsing* he announces his departure.

COMPELLED TO LEAVE – A HSING

Vol. III, Leaf 4

Does my Lord not see the falcon on the wrist?
Once satiated, it no longer flies.

How can it become a swallow under the eaves,
Carrying mud and taking shelter near the warmth of a fire?

Men of the wilds are large-minded, natural, not servile or self-conscious;
How can they remain long among princes and noblemen?

* * *

We next find Tu Fu near the Hot Springs of Lin T'ung which gush from the heart of Li Mountain, twenty miles South-east of the Capital. These springs, exhaling suffionic vapours, have been in use for millenniums and are still a popular bathing resort. Here the Bright Emperor first saw Yang Kuei-fei. A traveller, writing in 1902, describes the pool as it was then:

'In the side of a hill was a hot sulphur-spring. A stone-cave built over it inclosed a pool about forty feet square. The yellow water

had been bubbling up into its rock-hewn bowl while empires on our side of the world had come and gone. An inscription over the entrance to the cave told of its having been repaired by an emperor of China who reigned two thousand years ago. By a system of underground pipes the steaming water was carried about a thousand yards to a hollow on the hillside, where it formed an artificial lake. Its margin was shaded by shrubbery and plants of varieties rare in Shênsi. Narrow piers on piles extended from the shore to a series of pavilions in the centre of the lake. A narrow walk connected the pavilions and wound in and out among them. With an exquisite attention to detail, the walks were inclosed by a low balustrade composed of serpentine railings that alternated in a succession of red and blue above the yellow water. In designing the pavilions care had evidently been taken that no two of the tiled roofs should be of the same colour. Above the lake labyrinthine paths led up the side of the hill to a little shrine at the top.

When I first saw the lake, the sun was dropping into the plain away off in the direction of Sian. As the last light of day fell across the glazed pavilion-roofs, they glinted and flashed for a few minutes and then their colours began to blend. Purple and green and red: all melted into gold, while the mist of yellow steam blended softly into the bushes on the shore.'

An Imperial Palace had been erected on the mountain by T'ai Tsung of T'ang; Ming Huang changed its name to Hua Ch'ing Kung, Glory of Purity Palace, and spent many hours within its walls.

Tu Fu writes a poem full of allusions to past history which he presents to one Kuo with whom he was sojourning, and then starts for the District of Fêng Hsien, known to-day as P'u Ch'êng. This long poem is one of the most famous from his brush, and, as a Chinese critic points out, many of the lines might fall from the lips of a Socialist to-day. Tu Fu speaks of his family, who have been staying with relations, and mentions the terrible hardships they have undergone. To lose a little son by starvation must indeed be the essence of bitter grief: a grief not to be mitigated by thoughts of extravagance within the

Palace, which he had now glimpsed with his own eyes.

Tu Fu's road led him North across the 'clear Wei river,' and still North through the cotton-growing areas of the province, until he reached the 'muddy Ching'; this river, travellers of to-day report, as does Tu Fu, is crossed by a cart ferry. Beyond is a district famous for horse-breeding, where lucerne grows in quantity, and soon the cart track leads through typical loess country. Great gashes occur in the land: they cannot be called valleys, they are canyons rather, and travellers must descend and re-mount cliffs of yellow, friable earth, several tens of feet in height. The West gate of P'u Ch'êng is still impressive, reminiscent of a prosperous past, and the place, lying in the centre of the rich wheat-fields of Shênsi, has always been important. A plain surrounds it and hills, earth hills, rise to the North.

CHANTING THOUGHTS AS I TRAVEL FROM THE CAPITAL TO THE DISTRICT OF FÊNG HSIEN

Vol. III, Leaf 5

I

A cotton clad man, I live at Tu Ling;
Old age has but increased my stupid idealism.

To what delusion have I dedicated my person!
I dared imitate Hou, who became God of Grain,
and Ch'i the Great Minister.

Contrary to my expectation I am engulfed in
dashing waters;
My head is white, but I delight in bitter labour.

The work of my life can only cease when my coffin is closed:
Until then my resolve, my yearning to comprehend is unchanging.

In years of poverty I suffer for the black-haired people who prepare the ground for rice;
Sighing deeply, my bowels burn within me.

My venerable fellow scholars smile sardonic smiles;
Roused by injustice, I pour out songs the more passionately.

It is not that I lack the resolve to live by rivers, among hills;
Hearing wind scatter leaves, seeing off on their daily journey sun and moon.

Nay, because I live in the days of a Ruler like Yao or Shun,
I cannot endure thus for ever to take leave of the world.

To-day the Emperor and his Court, who are the portico and front hall of the palace, are prepared;
Can it be said that Officials who should provide beams for buildings on either side of the enclosure are lacking?

The sunflower, the clover, lean towards the Great Light;
Every living thing has its intrinsic essence which cannot be snatched away.

Regard the class of humble ants:
Covetous merely for their own holes.

Why do I emulate the great whale,
Who perpetually aspires to bank up the waters in the dark sea?

My life and its principles have been ruined because of this ambition,
Yet to serve, or seek audience of the powerful, turns my ears red with shame.

Persistent, decided, I have persevered, but now drop as a bird drops to earth;
I can endure disappointment, endure to become dust, even dust that no longer moves.

But in the end I am ashamed at the example of the hermits Ch'ao and Yu,
Who would not forego their lives of self-restraint.

Careless of everything, I drink deeply to console myself,
And sing songs to break up, cut short my sorrow.

II

Decimated the one hundred plants in the sunset of the year,
High ridges torn open by the angry wind.

Lofty, transcendent, the dark pathway of the sky,
When in the heart of night the traveller sets out.

My garment girdle snaps in the piercing frost,
Nor can straight, stiff fingers knot it again.

In the ice-cold sunrise watch I pass below Li Mountain;
The Imperial couch stands among towering peaks.

Soldiers block the cold frontiers against rebel leaders;
They climb, press under foot, the glairy cliffs and deep ravines.

A thick cloud of steam rises from the green jasper pool;
Long spears and feather banners of the Royal Guard are pressed together.

The Lord and his Ministers dally in voluptuous joy,
And notes sounded on bells and drums ring to the far distance.

They wear long tassels, do all who are graciously permitted to bathe in the hot springs;
Nor do men dressed in short coats attend the revels.

The pure white silk presented in the rose red Palace Halls,
Was made, came from the hands of a shivering woman.

Her husband was beaten, horsewhipped, in their home
By those who collect and amass tribute for the Pillars of the Capital.

The Gifts of the Enlightened One go out in square baskets and round;
His fixed desire is that Provinces and State shall live.

Suppose the officers who prostrate themselves at Court are forgetful of vital principles;
Does not the Lord then cast away with both hands these gifts?

Innumerable officials overflow Dawn-audience Hall;
Those filled with love towards mankind should tremble at their own inadequacy.

Gold platters within the Palace, so I hear,
Are every one in the homes of the rich, the Wei Clan and the Ho.

In the centre Hall are Spirits and Immortals,
Their jade bodies clouded by smoke of incense.

Guests wrapped warm in yellow rat fur robes;
Plaintive flutes blending with clear psalteries.

Thick broth of camel's pad is pressed upon the guests,
And frosted solid oranges, better than the golden loose-skinned fruit.

Wine and meat are stale within the Scarlet Gates;
Bones of those who freeze and starve lie on the road.

King-posts at the Palace corners and pillars of rotted wood are but a cubit's length apart, but the span of a woman's forearm.
I am balked, my hopes blighted; it is difficult to say more!

III

My whipple-tree turns North, I cross the Wei and Ching;
At the ferry under government control I again alter my wheel tracks.

Teeming waters stream down from the West,
High, at the edge of eye-sight, hazardous in their height.

I suspect they come from K'ung T'ung, the Mountain which holds up the stars;
I fear they will overwhelm and snap T'ien Chu, the Pillar of Heaven.

Fortunately the river bridges have not burst from this inward force,
But there is a sound of ominous cracking in the buttresses and upright posts.

Passing travellers take hands, drag up and help each other;
Streams widen nor can they be crossed.

IV

My old wife has gone to a strange district;
Wind and snow divide the ten mouths of our household.

Who is it, who for a long time past has not been able to support them?

I go in order that we may starve and die of thirst together.

Entering the door, I hear whimpering, the wail of an infant;
My tiny boy has already died of hunger.

How can I refrain from a lament?
Even the neighbours in our crooked lane gulp down sobs.

There is shame in my heart at being the father of a son
Who was snapped off in tender childhood because he had no food.

Can it be known if grain will ripen in the burning autumn?
The poor suffer misery and want; they are agitated, anxious.

All the days of my life I have had no cause to pay taxes on land, taxes on property;
Nor is my name on the register of men who fight, who beat a drum.

I consider quietly the results of my deeds, some bitter as the taste of vinegar, others beyond my deserts;
But the masses, the people are shut in on all sides by trouble, perturbation.

V

The dark thoughts in my heart are with the conscripts taken from their livelihood:
Underlings, who in consequence are far away guarding the marches.

The peak of my sorrow equals in height Chung
Nan Hills;
Nor in this vast, this whirling chaos can it find
an end.

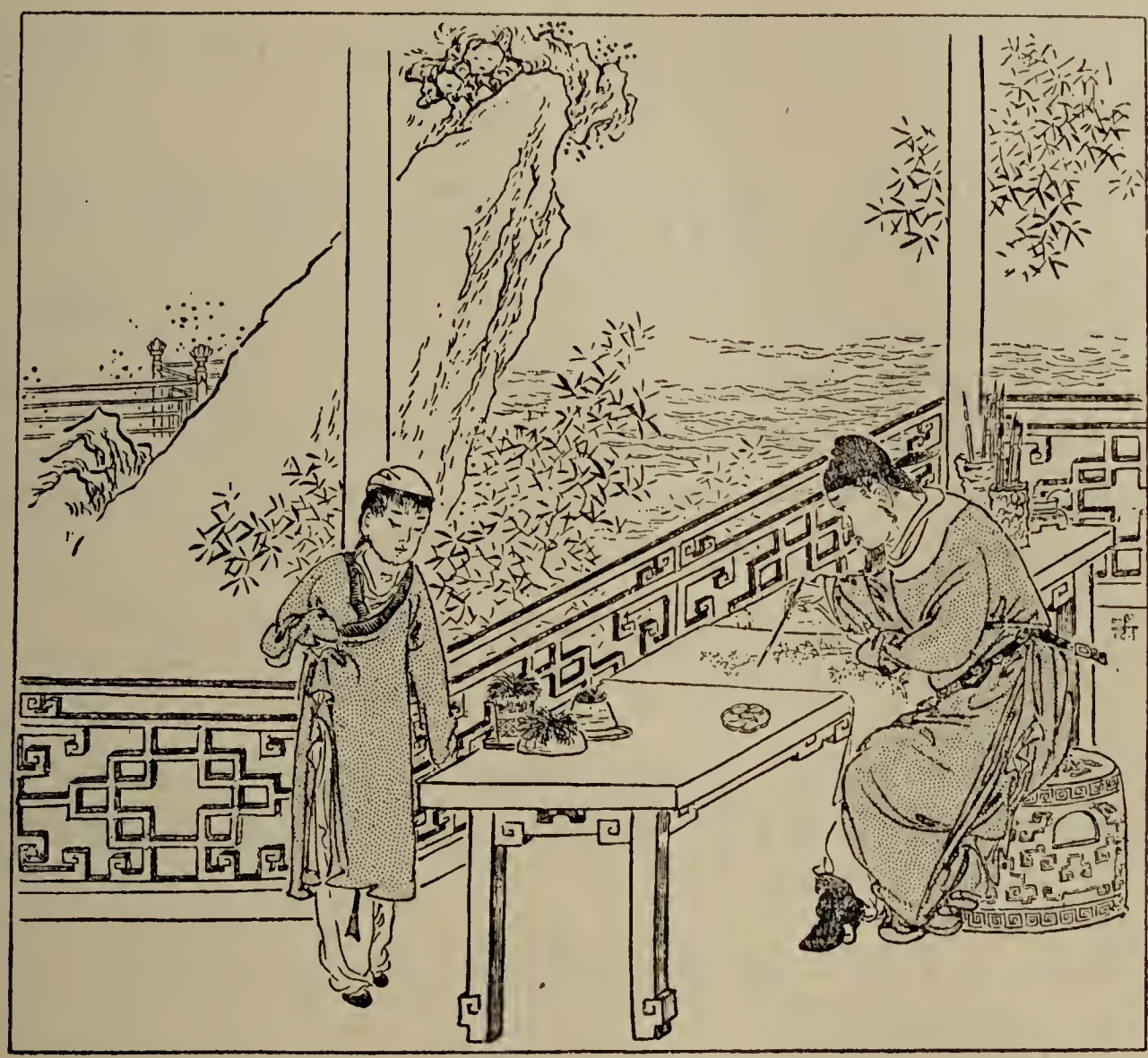
At Fêng Hsien Tu Fu had friends. He writes a charming eulogy on a newly painted landscape by one of these friends, which Mr. Nung says reads as though written in the opening year. 'In the Twelfth Moon,' he continued, 'poets and painters dislike to move the brush, but when Spring comes, their spirit rises.' I must regretfully forbear to quote it. Tu Fu tells us also about a delightful visit made during the First Moon, T'ien Pao, fifteenth revolution, mentioning incidentally that a broken jar serves as a window in the house where he is lodging: a proof that the house was of a very humble description. Such a use for broken jars is still common in China, as I know from my own observation. I quote merely the autobiographical lines of the poem; the historical conclusion, although doubtless illuminating to Ts'ui and Li, is confusing to an Occidental reader.

ON THE THIRTIETH DAY OF THE FIRST MOON; SEEKING TS'UI CH'I AND LI FÊNG

Vol. III, Leaf 7

Rays from the rising sun come through the broken
jar which makes the window;
Sleeping on my back, I am aroused, I slip on my
worn fur coat;

I rise; go out; look up to vast infinity;
Breath of Spring is gradually softer, milder;



吳友如畫寶畫寶補遺　二　第十三集第下冊

Inspiration comes; no time for laziness;
This morning early I comb my hair;

Go out from the door; without waiting an instant
Follow the road on foot, noticing what pleases me.

My thoughts are again untrammelled as I lean on my thorn staff,
And I avoid a meeting with the wealthy and powerful.

Late in life my friendship with Ts'ui and Li has come about;

There are but few of their order, few so really quick of comprehension.

Each time I go across, and taking up wine, throw back my head, drink it down,
I could at their two houses make a long stay.

I am glad to have formed this friendship, and rejoice in the Hamlet of Good-will;
Because I have been bidden, I go on this festival day, the thirtieth of the First Moon.

Garden of honourable Li is overgrown;
Tall, tall, the many old bamboos.

He leads guest where he sees the porch is swept;
He is ready at any time to offer wine, exchange toasts.

Lord Ts'ui is pre-eminent in his talents for feasting;
He also fears the grief of an empty flagon.

He knows nothing of affairs in All-Below the Sky;
His nature deferential, he asks: will you have wine or not?

Sprouts on plants already show green;
Also hear bees flying in warm air.

I think I see farmers preparing tools;
When will the soldiers cease their arming?

* * *

While Tu Fu is at Fêng Hsien, a friend whom he has made in the Official Residence where they both serve,

passes through on a homeward journey. Evidently Ch'êng the Recorder is a man of deep integrity, and Tu Fu, fearing that, in these distressful days, his 'pinions' may be forced to obey some unworthy command, recommends that he withdraw, for a time at least, from service. An Lu-shan had conquered the district North of the river, had proclaimed himself Emperor, under the title Hsiung Wu, and was marching westwards. All men knew that a crisis was rapidly approaching, and it has been the immemorial custom in China for sincere officials to retire at such times, and remain aloof until frenzy has spent its breath and peace has been restored.

TAKING LEAVE OF CH'ÊNG, RECORDER IN THE BUREAU OF THE HEIR APPARENT'S GUARD, WHO RETURNS TO HIS OLD COUNTRY

Vol. III, Leaf 7

I, the man of low esteem, will soon drop like a flower, be cut off;
Illness wraps me round; dizzy confusion, forgetfulness, are met together.

Formerly I had friends to whom I went, who came to me;
Now, if I recognize one, I do not remember ten!

I meet Lord Ch'êng in the evening of life,
And exchange words with him, whose talents far surpass those of other men.

His warm response stirs my ears and eyes;
Comprehension, realization, are quickened to supreme awareness.

After a thousand cycles I possess a true friend, a Pao Shu-ya,
Who does not wait to come at any given moment but anticipates my needs.

His thoughts, heavy with affection, cause me, the dark old cypress, to turn green;
His integrity, instinct with vitality, reanimates me; I seemed a serpent, coiled in its winter sleep.

I tell over the times I have seen this man
Who consoles me, and dries the tears of my old age.

* * *

He says we shall be cut apart, nor can he linger while the shadow on the sundial marks passing days;
One hundred sorrows once more pervade my being.

Suddenly the demon of shame rises in my heart: I feel useless as old ink, no longer black;
By my friend's bounty I accept, enjoy these delicacies, this savoury food.

A long fish dangles from a white silk cord;
Transparent wine succeeds to rice pale as jade.

He who treads a road of poverty discerns the true form of friendship;
His sorrowful pathway is blocked by the sickness of the world.

* * *

East wind plays on Spring ice;
Empress earth is drenched by boundless rushing water.

PART XII

From White Waters to Three Streams

T'IEN PAO, FIFTEENTH REVOLUTION. A.D. 756

Pai Shui or White Waters lies about sixteen miles North-north-west of P'u Ch'êng, which was originally considered the southern division of White Waters District. I mention this as Tu Fu, in a poem written there, remarks that he has come from the 'Southern District,' meaning P'u Ch'êng. One Ts'ui, Tu Fu's mother's younger brother, was an official at Pai Shui, where Tu Fu had visited him the previous autumn and had been present at a 'praying for rain ceremony' carried out most successfully by the said uncle.

Now in the late spring or early summer of T'ien Pao, fifteenth revolution, Tu Fu and his whole family go there. We cannot account for the 'ten mouths' he refers to in 'Chanting Thoughts as I Travel to Fêng Hsien,' but we know of six at least. Tu Fu's wife, two little sons, more than one little girl, and one baby – also a girl, are referred to severally; the others may have included Tu Fu's younger brother Chan, of whom we shall hear frequently, as well as the servants whose 'mouths' the Chinese rightly counted among those of the 'household.'

Ts'ui had a beautiful *chai*, a study or room for meditation. I always delight in the analysis (given in the *Shuo Wên*) of the character *chai*: to regulate the heart so as to receive the instructions of Heaven. The place where Ts'ui could carry out this regulation stood high in the hills. Below lay the innumerable waters of the tawny Shênsi plain, streaming, hurrying towards T'ung Kuan,

the Lofty Barrier Pass, where they cast themselves with one accord upon the bosom of the Yellow River and are carried to the sea. Beyond the Stream rises Hua Shan, Peak of the West, hovering dimly above its foot-hills. The view is wide-spreading, unearthly in its beauty.

But in the Sixth Moon came news of all too earthly troubles. The flimsy mask of loyalty had dropped from before the face of An Lu-shan: all men saw him as a rebel, and one who had men, horses, rations – all the paraphernalia of battle – at his back. Tu Fu refers to his careful preparation in ' Former Travels,' a poem written years later.

Vol. XIV, Leaf 17

* * *

In Yu and Yen military measures were strict;
Supplies for troops were obtained with great prevision.

From Gates of Wu circulated grain, plain white silk;
They passed through P'êng Lai, floating on the sea.

Flesh food was required for thirty times ten thousand men;
Hunters' arrows rose from yellow dust.

Down from the North-east he swept: through Shansi, up-stream along the Yellow River, past the East Capital, which he embraced as he went, and towards the Lofty Barrier. Could his advance be halted? Ko-shu Han and twenty times ten thousand soldiers marched forward in what proved a vain attempt.

LO YANG

Vol. XVII, Leaf 5

Years ago Lo Yang fell, sank under waves of invasion;
Horses of Hu Barbarians dashed against T'ung Kuan Pass.

Son of Heaven then suffered sad autumn thoughts;
Men of the Capital changed colour from grief.

* * *

In the Capital, what the French call *zizanie* had broken out. Counsels were divided. Had Ko-shu Han been allowed to follow his own desire and stand guard at the impregnable T'ung Kuan, he might have turned the tide; but orders from the Palace, inspired by Yang Kuo-chung, forced him to go through the Pass, to meet and be engulfed by the oncoming waves of Lu-shan's men.

This was the news which reached Tu Fu and his maternal uncles as they sat in the place where 'the heart should be regulated to receive the instructions of Heaven.'

THE STUDY IN THE HEIGHTS OF THE VENERABLE TS'UI NINETEEN, SHAO FU OF WHITE WATERS

Vol. III, Leaf 8

The guest has come from the South District;
How wide the view! how awe-inspiring! nothing compares with it.

I eat travellers' food, therefore the white days are long;
Moreover it is the time of blazing red-hot heat.

At study in the hills we sit among the tops of trees;
For two nights I lodge in the peace, the beauty of solitude.

In the pure dawn we climb, together we clamber up and up;
From the arrogant height of sheer cliffs we peer to the depths.

吳友如畫寶 古今人物圖 十八 第一集第下冊

Ridges rise behind the house, extending on either side a girdle of hills;
Far distant lies the pattern of the plain, its scale could be measured by a foot-rule.

I now understand how my revered host
Is enabled here to banish grief, anxiety.

On these perilous steps at the base of the clear sky
Layers of ice are formed from trickling rain-scour.

Above there are without thought clouds;
Below there are about to drop stones.

Sound of gushing spring is heard; again it ceases;
The water flows, is still, according as it is impeded.

Birds call, hide their bodies;
It is as if they feared shots from a crossbow.

The official, a seeming hermit, follows his nature and his tastes;
This then is his humble dwelling.

At White Waters see uncles of my mother's Clan,
Venerable old men who resemble the elders among Immortals.

Sitting below tall pines with thorn staffs,
They are officers of State, yet live in this isolated valley.

For my delight they steam *t'iao hu* stalks;
Sauntering about, we open out minds in friendly intimacy.

* * *

We sit a long time; wind rises angrily;
Evening comes; hills turn jade grey.

We face a scaly water dragon falling from ten times ten feet;
Flung back, coiling within a bordered whorl.

Wherefore we hear a thunder in the air:
It beats *yin yin!* seeking the pulses of earth.

Its misty vapour obscures the bright sky, wreathes the summit of the peaks,
And causes hill demons grief which we commiserate.

K'un Lun, K'ung T'ung heights
Are unobstructed as we turn our heads.

Past front pavilion flows reflected light of sunset,
Shining red on sheer cliffs of Flowery Mountain Peak.

Fume of marching men pervades the forest on winding summits;
Glint from the surface of the water is pierced by shining arrow-heads.

We know they are the troops of General Ko-shu Han;
Their iron horses are massed like clouds and mist.

Jade wine cup is tasteless, without flavour;
Can it be that the Hu Chieh are rebels, enemies?

My long sad song rises to the roof ridge;
Tears flow to the sitting-mat, running down the lappet of my coat.

In man's life sadness and joy are halved;
Heaven, Earth, meet with harmony, resistance.

I sigh and grieve that men of the Ten Thousand States
Have not understood and provided against the refractory Barbarians.

Fierce generals are perplexed by innumerable conflicting orders;
Palace plans, wise stratagems are disregarded.

When will the East Capital be recovered?
The band of Imperial bucklers is not yet loosed.

We learn that the pure feast is ended:
It is difficult to resist the longing to understand solitude.

Three sighs before the wine and food:
How contrive to restore the peaceful past?

It is not difficult to imagine the anxious discussions, the hurried decisions with which the people of the Shênsi plain were faced. To place their families beyond danger from the Mongol tribes was the first thought in men's minds: they must fly as their forefathers had fled, as their descendants have fled, how many times before and since. Tu Fu decided that San Ch'uan, Three Streams, in the District of Fu Chou would be a place of safety, so the family set out on foot, conveyances being probably unobtainable, and joined the northward trek of the population. The road, which led across loess chasms, was appalling, and to make matters worse, a dreadful flood occurred. We have no contemporary account of the journey, but a year later Tu Fu describes it from memory in one of his best-known *hsing*, which I insert at this juncture.

FLEEING TO P'ÊNG YA

Vol. IV, Leaf 5

My heart recalls our escape at the beginning of the rebellion;
Fleeing northwards, we endured dangers, difficulties.

Night, a deep pool on P'êng Ya Road;
Moon, a bright flame on Pai Shui Hills.

For an eternity my entire household stumbled forward on foot;
The people we met were all coarse and brazen-faced.

The land rose, uneven, irregular; birds called in the ravines;
We did not see a single traveller returning whence we had come.

Famished, my foolish girl baby gnawed me;
She wailed; I dreaded tiger, wolf, would hear.

I covered her mouth and wrapped her to my bosom;
She turned over, turned back, threw herself to the side; the sounds increased; she screamed with rage.

Little son understood the situation better;
He, therefore, sought bitter plums to eat.

For a period of ten days the roll of thunder alternated with a downpour of rain;
In mud, in mire, we dragged, clung to one another.

Since we lacked resist rain preparations,
Our garments were cold; the paths slippery as glass.

At times we suffered great hardship and bitterness,
Covering but a few *li* during an entire day.

Wild fruits constituted our provisions, our food for the journey;

Low branches provided the rafters of our dwelling.

The stones were wet with water when we set out at dawn;
The sky was dim with vapour when we called a halt at dusk.

We delayed a little at T'ung Chia Marsh,
Hoping to go out through Lu Tzŭ Pass.

Sun Tsai, my dear old friend, lives there;
His virtue, his sense of honour is high; it towers above the filmy clouds.

The dusk of evening was already black when he welcomed the travellers;
He threw wide the great middle doors opening in a line, and lighted many lights.

In warm, well-heated water he washed my feet,
And cut strips of paper to call back my soul.

With this, his wife and children came out;
When they saw us, they sobbed; tears drenched their faces.

All my chicks, their eyes drooping with sleep, sat here and there;
He called them to get up, and take the platters with the evening meal; (and, turning, said to me:)

'Honourable One, from this moment I vow with you
'To be knotted for eternity as younger brother to elder brother.'

He forthwith emptied and prepared the Guest
Hall for my use;
I lodged quietly and offered him my gratitude.

Who is willing at this difficult and dangerous
juncture
To open without reserve, to divulge the thoughts
of his heart, and his inner emotions?

Since we parted, a year has paced through the
constellations; moons have succeeded one
to another;
Yet the Deerskin Tribe of the Hu Barbarians still
stir up tribulation.

How were it, had I wings and feathers?
I would go forth, I would fly and drop down
before the Above One.

Meanwhile at Ch'ang An disaster had been complete. During the heat of the Sixth Moon, Ming Huang had been forced to fly. Yang Kuei-fei and a few of the people he cared for most had accompanied him, but the vast majority of the Palace ladies had been left behind and had fallen victims to the rebels, who entered the Capital, desecrated the Palace and destroyed the Spirit Tablets of the Imperial House. Tu Fu, who did not witness the catastrophe, recounts the tragic happenings years later in a poem called:

THE DAYS OF LONG AGO

Vol. XIV, Leaf 18

In days when I dwelt at the West Capital,
Hu Barbarians came; overflowed Cinnabar Halls.

Heart of night, Ancestral Temple of Most High
is consumed by fire;
Even Cloudy River becomes scarlet.

Loosened tiles fly ten *li*;
Thin shrine curtains torn to shreds flutter in
empty air.

Sick at heart, I think of sacred wooden strips
where dwell ancestral spirits;
One, one – ashes on the mournful wind.

Sun sinks low, dusk collects, iron mounted men
come, line on line;
Sun rises high, day dawns, treasure-laden asses
scatter.

Traitors! Officers who have bowed before Heaven,
now manifest reverse of loyalty,
And congratulate each other that their efforts
have succeeded.

At this moment Imperial Consorts, ladies of lesser
rank, are massacred;
How many will rot and become dust for com-
post?

From its place between Spirit-screen and North
door, the Jade Throne is overturned;
Painted butterflies and moths are peeled from the
white gauze window panes.

Whereabouts of two Enlightened Ones is not
known;

Old men who have seen years pace one hundred
cycles, in secret weep silent tears.

* * *

A commentator says that when Tu Fu and his party passed Hua Yüan, they heard that the Heir Apparent, who thus became the Emperor Su Tsung, had given way to the importunation of his officers and had ascended the throne at Ling Wu, at the same moment creating his father, who had fled to Szechwan, Shang Huang or Above Emperor. Tu Fu speaks of this crisis in 'Years of Strength Travel':

In dark North, beyond the Stream, wind whirled
dust of battle;
To far Min Mountain passed Imperial procession.

Two Palaces! in each direction people were warned
to avoid road taken by the Rulers;
Ten thousand *li* apart, the Sons of Heaven gazed
towards each other.

This event, as we know, occurred during the Seventh Moon of T'ien Pao, fifteenth revolution, and even before the days of telegraph, the news must have spread throughout the country with the 'speed of fire.' The *nien hao* was changed to Chih Tê, Arrival of Virtue, but the year was still described as a 'revolution.'

The flood I have mentioned is not recorded in the annals, therefore Tu Fu's poem, written after his arrival at Three Streams, provides a valuable historical document. The 'axles of earth' to which he refers are supposed, according to the *Pao P'o Tzŭ*, a book by Ko Hung, to number three thousand six hundred, while

famous hills and great rivers are connected by holes! The river which he is watching while it bursts its banks, is the Lo. It rises not far from San Ch'uan, absorbs two other streams in its course and joins the Yellow River in the T'ung District where, to quote a commentary, 'its force is very great and rapid.'

The fact that the Heir Apparent, under whose direct notice Tu Fu has been serving, and who is himself an upright if not a very forceful character, is now Emperor, causes the 'snow goose' of ambition to once more stir its wings. Tu Fu decides to leave his family at Three Streams, and hastens to offer his services to a new Son of Heaven.

WATCHING THE FLOOD WATERS AT SAN CH'UAN, THREE STREAMS

Vol. III, Leaf 9

We passed Hua Yüan as we came;
We have not seen the barrow-dotted plains since then.

Only earth hills rise towards the North;
And as day succeeds to day, we follow deep-cut ravines.

Fire clouds gather without warning,
Lightning often flies before our eyes.

Rivulets of rain flow from many peaks and ridges;
They meet in the roadway, overflow, rushing on with a sound of quarrelling.

A warm mist envelops us, yellow vapour rises
from the waters
Whose concourse coils, curves and blends on the
banks above us.

We gaze at high waves in the bright dawn-watch;
Suddenly we see a sunless precipice collapse.

A hornless dragon lurks, perchance, in his mud-
hole;
Antlered stags climb dangerous heights and herd
together.

A torn up tree, a rotted raft, roll on the waters;
Rough gravel piles up, is heaped, blocks the
road.

Voices of spirits above and demons below ring
down the wailing wind;
The agitated mien of the people about us be-
trays their terror.

Were there not ten thousand conducting channels,
Could the Four Great River-systems be created?

We gaze at springs and sources in flood,
And dread that rivers and seas will break their
bounds.

Floating sand overtops retaining banks;
Water scours holes and bares the pine, the cedar
roots;

Mounts, rises high, bursts the gateway to the
hills;
Turns, returns, whirls, shatters the axle of earth.

At Chiao Lo it flows into the vast, the Yellow River;
Can it in two short nights reach to the Pass?

Surely many prefectures must be washed away by the deep water;
We seem to hear weeping, wailing, from ten thousand homes.

Very far from clear, discoloured, muddy, is the water,
And there is still force stored in raging wind and waves.

At what hour will boats and carts be able to move forward?
The black atmosphere from the World of Shade is not even shot with light.

The clouds of life now scud in confusion;
Verily we are destined to tread the road of homeless wanderers.

It is difficult to find shelter for our persons within the Domain of the One Man;
Our feet edgewise, we creep along the slippery rock wall.

Without cessation, peals of thunder issue from the clouds;
The dangerous, terrifying pathway still coils on.

In the whole country no bridges span the streams;
But we must cross, we trust the waters will fall.

I grieve for the scholar in the forest because
He may not escape the bellies of the hungry fish.

I lift my head towards the boundless sky,
Wondering how I shall be able to ride the great
snow goose of my ambition.

PART XIII

Journey towards Ling Wu

CHIH TÊ, FIRST REVOLUTION. A.D. 756

Hurriedly arranging matters for his family at the village of Ch'iang, near Three Streams in the Prefecture of Fu Chou, Tu Fu, although exhausted after the terrible journey North, set off in the autumn of the year to join the new Emperor at his Travelling Palace. No indications are given in regard to the route; it is impossible therefore to enter it upon the map, but he started in the direction of Ling Wu to the far North-west, burning with indignation that the evil-smelling, sheep-eating Mongols should desecrate the fair heritage of which Ming Huang had proved himself unworthy.

HURRYING FROM THIS PLACE [1]

Vol. III, Leaf 9

I hasten from this place: the year has paced through the constellations, the season is late;
For the sake of my country I exert bone and sinew; my person proceeds by stealth, a rat from its hole.

Forthwith poems and writings are hidden in walls, partitions;
Moreover slaves and menials control flags and feathered banners.

[1] Line three is an allusion to the anxiety of scholars when, in the second century before our era, the First Emperor ordered that all books be burned! Many of the works which have come down to us were then hidden in the hollow walls of houses.

I hear the Imperial Travelling Palace has now
risen anew;
Hence I risk meeting disaster in order to offer
my services, my life.

The Spirit of the Great Emperor who founded the
dynasty in All Below the Sky,
Should see the casting out of these stinking,
reeking dogs and sheep.

On the road he meets a forlorn member of the Imperial House and stops to converse with and try to comfort him. There is a clue to the date of writing in the line which states that

A hundred days have already passed since he hid
in thorns, and brambles.

An Lu-shan entered the Capital on the twelfth day of the Sixth Moon, so, although the number must not be taken literally, we know that over three Moons have waxed and waned since the Bright Emperor fled at dawn through the Gate of Lingering Autumn, leaving the members of his Clan to fend for themselves; and winter must be approaching, if it is not already present. There are several allusions in the poem which must be explained. A black bird with a white head was supposed to predict the fall of Hou Ching, a rebel of several centuries earlier. Tu Fu does not think that Lu-shan's power will last very long, especially as the Hua Mên, one of the Uighur tribes, had taken an oath to help Su Tsung 'turn his red shame snow-white,' a very common Chinese expression, and had performed the curious ceremony of gashing their faces until the blood ran, as an earnest of their good faith.

The Dragon nose referred to, we should describe as 'Roman'; it was looked upon as a feature peculiar to members of the ruling house. Kao Tsu of Han, always considered a prototype, had had it because, before his birth, his mother continually thought of dragons. The Strong Son of the Dark North is the unfortunate Ko-shu Han, who had been forced against his better judgment to lead his troops through the T'ung Pass. It seems therefore a trifle hard that Tu Fu should accuse him of having but a 'monkey's wit,' but I suppose that even Tu Fu's bluntness was tempered on occasion, and pity for the miserable youth, fated in all probability to a cruel death, stirred his feelings. I have described the vital essence, referred to in the last line, in the glossary under 'auspicious breath.'

PITY FOR A DESCENDANT OF KINGS

Vol. III, Leaf 6

Over the city wall at Ch'ang An a black bird with a white head
Flew in the dark night; it croaked above the Gate of Lingering Autumn.

Settling upon the Great Halls in the homes of high officials, it pecked at the roofs.
These officials, who had won through to power, fled from the halls below, to escape the Hu Barbarians.

The gold whips are broken, snapped in two; the nine Imperial horses are dead;

Although they urged and lashed their animals, those of the same bones and flesh could not keep together in their flight.

I see a man who wears at his waist a precious girdle-ring of green white coral;
Ah! pity the Descendant of Kings, who at the corner of the road weeps silent tears.

I question him as to his past. He is not willing to tell his surname or his name,
But only says: 'I am in bitter poverty and distress; I beg to be your slave.'

A hundred days have already passed since he hid in thorns and brambles;
On his body there is no unbroken flesh or skin.

Sons and grandsons of the Most High Lord all have Dragon noses:
Men of the Dragon Seed naturally differ from ordinary people.

Jackals and wolves infest the Capital; Dragons wander in the wilds;
The virtue of the King's Descendant will protect his priceless body, a body worth a thousand ounces of gold.

At this point where roads meet and cross, I dare not speak at length,
But for the sake of the King's Descendant I delay an instant, saying:

'Yesterday night a Spring wind wafted the rank smell of blood;
'The ancient Capital is filled to overflowing with humped camels, trailed in from the East.

'The Strong Son of the Dark North, able of body and hand,
'Was formerly so fearless, resolute; why has he now but a monkey's wit?

'I have heard a secret: the Son of Heaven has already stepped down from the throne,
'And the Enlightened One in the North, the Virtuous, is to be served by the Mongol Kahn from the South.

'The Hua Mên tribe have gashed their faces and taken an oath to turn our red shame to snow;
'Hush! do not utter a sound; other men spy upon us!

'I am torn with pity for the Descendant of Kings, he must be cautious, nor relax his care;
'There is no moment when the vital essence does not rise from the Five Tombs.'

Tu Fu parted from the Descendant of Kings and presumably pressed on towards the North-west – but alas for the 'snow goose of his ambition,' the bird seemed doomed to be caged. This time interference came from an alien source: An Lu-shan's men seized Tu Fu, taking him into captivity.

PART XIV

Captivity in Ch'ang An

PARTS OF CHIH TÊ, FIRST AND SECOND REVOLUTIONS.

A.D. 756–757

I

The captivity did not last so very long, nor was it so very onerous as such. Its duration was five or six months and its terms forbade Tu Fu to leave the Capital, but being unknown and unimportant had at this juncture its advantages, and An Lu-shan did not commandeer the Master's services. Men of high rank such as Wang Wei and his brother officials were seized and ordered to carry on the administration. Some committed suicide; Wang Wei disabled himself by taking a drug and paralysing his vocal cords; others quite cheerfully served Lu-shan, who, having proclaimed himself Emperor, established himself in the Imperial City.

Tu Fu, wandering from house to house, visiting places connected with happier days, taking refuge sometimes in temples, always on the look-out for a chance to escape, leaves a record of the experience in twenty or more poems which, with one or two exceptions, I quote. The first deals with a visit to the Crooked River where the Bright Emperor and his Court had so often held revel. Tu Fu, absorbed in reminiscence, misses his way home.

A LAMENT AT THE RIVER HEAD [1]

Vol. III, Leaf 10

The greybeard from the wilds of Shao Ling
gulps down the sound of his sobs,
And on a Spring day goes by stealth to a bend
of the Crooked River.

The one thousand doors of the Palaces and Halls
at the River Head are locked;
For whom do the tender willows, the new-sprung
iris, don their green?

I remember in old days rainbow banners swept
into South Park,
And in the Park ten thousand living things put
forth the beauty of their colour.

The Chief and Honoured Lady from the depths
of Chao Yang Hall,
Accompanied and served the Lord, sat beside
the Lord in the wheeled Palace chair.

Beautiful women of lesser rank carrying bows
and arrows preceded the Palace chair;
They rode white horses who champed at their
gold bits.

Bending back, their faces turned to Heaven,
they let fly arrows at the clouds;

[1] The words 'Chief and Honoured Lady,' 'Wandering Soul' and 'She who has gone' all refer to Yang Kuei-fei. 'He' is of course the Bright Emperor.

The ladies smile: a pair of flying wings king-
fisher wings, drop straight as does a stone.

Bright eyes, gleaming teeth, where are they
now?
Blood defiles the Wandering Soul; it cannot
return to its former home.

Transparent Wei waters, flowing from deep in
Chien Ko Mountains, join East to West;
But She who has gone, and He who remains,
have no channel of communication.

The life of man is filled with emotion; tears wet
his breast;

River waters, river flowers, is it possible that they should come to an eternal end?

At yellow dusk, Hu cavalry fill the city with their dust;
I seek my abode in the Southern Suburb, but find myself North of the wall.

In the Tenth Moon of the year, which is considered the first of the Cold Season, bad news came to Ch'ang An and men of the Capital 'turned their faces to the North' in despair. This phrase must not be taken literally as regards direction. Wheresoever the Emperor may be is considered the North, and there he, the Ruler of Mankind, sits facing South: Chinese civilization is erected on an invariable southern orientation. Palaces, temples, houses, seats of honour, all face South. The bad news of which I speak brought personal grief to Tu Fu who admired Fang Kuan, the general who met defeat at Ling Pao from rebel arms. Terse passages from the *T'ang Shu* describe the situation. They read:

> Chih Tê, first revolution, Tenth Moon, Fang Kuan himself begged to be allowed to punish the refractory rebels; divided armies into three divisions; South Army advanced from I Shou; Central army advanced from Wu Kung; North army advanced from Fêng T'ien; Kuan himself commanded Central army and led the foremost tip (i.e. the vanguard); on *hsing ch'ou* day Central army and Northern army met disaster from rebels at Ch'ên T'ao Marsh. . . . At this time Fang Kuan imitated ancient methods, using chariots to give battle. Rebels let go fire and burned them. Men, cattle, Official chariots, thrown into great disorder: the dead and wounded more than four times ten thousand men.

Vol. III, Leaf 11

Youths of good stock from ten Prefectures in
First Moon of Cold Season
Poured out their blood; it forms the pools of
Ch'ên T'ao Marsh.

Wilderness is deserted, sky clear; no dust nor
sound of battle;
Four times ten thousand soldiers who volunteered
to serve, died upon the self-same day.

The swarm of Hu Barbarians came back, their
arrows washed in blood;
In market-place of Capital they still drink deep
and shout songs of Hu.

Men of the Capital turn their faces towards
the North and weep silent tears;
Day and night they watch for Imperial
soldiers to arrive.

The miserable remnants of Fang Kuan's army retreating from Ch'ên T'ao, which lay East of Hsien Yang District, made a stand outside the gate of Ch'ing Fan, a walled city backing on the T'ai Pai Shan or Great White Mountains which stretch to the South of Wu Kung District. Here they met with another defeat. In writing of this second disaster, Tu Fu closes with an appeal to the troops to keep their spirits up until the New Year dawns and the allied tribes, whose coming he had announced to the 'Descendant of Kings,' have time to arrive in the heart of China.

Vol. III, Leaf 11

Our army stands at bay near East Gate of Ch'ing Fan;
Heaven is cold; their horses drink from holes in the T'ai Pai, the Great White Mountains.

The Yellow Heads, the sons of Hsi, come daily to the West;
Their meagre cavalry dares bend the bow and gallop forward to attack.

On the hills, snow; in the rivers, ice; over the wastes wind soughs, clangs on a jade-stone psaltery;
Black is smoke from beacon fires; white are men's bones.

How contrive to send a letter telling our troops
To avoid all hasty ill-considered moves, to persist, endure, until the bright year dawns?

SNOW FALLS

Vol. III, Leaf 11

The clash, the cries of battle; sounds of weeping, wailing; many fresh spirits of the dead;
His heart burning with autumn grief, the old man sits alone, humming poems in a deep low voice.

Clouds, torn in confusion, sink low in prevailing twilight;

Hurrying snowflakes perform a posturing dance
on whirling wind.

A gourd ladle is thrown down, the wine jar contains no more 'clear green';
An earthenware stove stands there even as though the fire were red.

In many Prefectures breath of news exhaled, breath of news inhaled, has ceased;
I sit in autumn grief: verily it is futile to send a letter.

Home-sickness mingles with anxiety for the fate of his country, and in the beautiful 'Moon Night' given in *Fir-Flower Tablets*, Tu Fu expresses his loneliness and his affection for wife and children. He also writes, on the first day of Chih Tê, second revolution, rather a trite little poem to his sister, a widow living in what is to-day Kiu-kiang on the Great River. Amid so much sadness it is a relief to turn to the description of a meeting with congenial friends, also captive within the walls of Ch'ang An. I omit the last twelve lines of this poem. Tu Fu discusses the styles of various poets and closes with a rather obvious lament on the times, which may be summarized in the words: Life is short, why not drink wine and forget sorrow?

WRITTEN ON THE THEME OF HSIEH HUA'S DRINKING SONG HEARD WHEN FEASTING WITH SU TUAN AND HSIEH FU

Vol. III, Leaf 12

Letters, perfect in harmony, have their revelation;
friendship, the communion of souls, has its true path;

Fame and eulogy have come early to Tuan and Fu.

Dear guests fill the Hall; one and all are heroes of the writing-brush;
First Moon, first day, the feast opens; we are reminded of fragrant verdure.

How shall we find a sure-footed messenger to bring us the far away plum flowers
Which, as we meet bright dawn, we will stick in our disordered hair?

Traces of last year's ice and snow lie over a thousand *li*;
Roused by one hundred flagons of wine, we try to release conceptions wrapped in our heart.

Men dropping to old age abhor the grievous sound of battle drums;
Hurry the wine-cup that it may keep back sorrow which weighs down the heart.

Men in early youth can make the effort to relax, smile, and speak words of fire;
See! my form and face are already withered, dried like perished wood.

* * *

Spring comes and with it acute nostalgia. One hundred and six days after Tung Chih or the Winter Solstice, the feast of Ch'ing Ming, Clear Brightness, falls; it is preceded on the one hundred and fifth day by the festival of Cold Food, and at this season it is imperative in the

Chinese idea that the graves of ancestors be tended by a united family. Tu Fu writes a poem full of allusions to legends connected with the moon, legends which I give in the *Chinese Mirror*; here I will quote only the opening lines of the poem:

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH DAY; AT NIGHT, FACING THE MOON

Vol. III, Leaf 13

No household at season of Cold Food:
My tears are like ripples of golden moonlight.

The Master seeks consolation, however, in writing of the family he would so gladly join.

SPRING – LOOKING INTO THE DISTANCE

Vol. III, Leaf 12

The State is destroyed; hills, rivers, remain;
Spring: within the city wall, grass, trees, are thick.

Emotion, fitting to the season; flowers bring a rush of tears;
I hate being cut apart; the song of birds quickens my heart.

Beacon fires burn incessantly; their flames connect this Third Moon with that of last year;

A letter from home would be worth ten thousand ounces of gold.

I scratch my white head; the hair is shorter than ever;
It is matted; I should like to knot it, but cannot succeed in thrusting through the jade hair-pin.

NEWS OF MY YOUNGER BROTHER

Vol. III, Leaf 13

Now comes a letter from P'ing Yin:
My far-away well-loved younger brother is alive!

He escaped, hiding himself by the way for a thousand *li* distance;
He ate in strange places, in hamlets of but one household.

Smoke from beacon fires rises high; determined battle cries ring anew;
I moan, tears flow in the old blood-stained traces.

I do not know if I shall ever see the days of old age;
My soul is called back for a short respite.

THINKING OF MY LITTLE BOY

Vol. III, Leaf 13

Chi Tzŭ! it is Spring, we are still apart!
The song of the bright oriole, the warm weather verily but sharpen my distress.

Cut off, separated, I am startled by the change of season;
With whom can I talk of your quick perception?

Of the mountain torrent which pours its water beside our pathway in the lonely hills?
The rough branches which form our gateway in the hamlet surrounded by old trees?

I think of you, and in my sadness find no comfort but in sleep;
Leaning on the balustrade I warm my back and doze when the sun shines after rain.

POEM SET DOWN WHEN IN CAPTIVITY

Vol. III, Leaf 13

My child Chi Tzŭ, the Thoroughbred Horse, is a dear little man;
Year before last was the time he learned to speak.

He knows how to enquire politely the surname of guests and people whom we meet,
And already recites the poems of his revered old father.

The world is in disorder; I grieve for his tender youth;
In a household severed by poverty he can only look up to a mother's love.

I cannot fulfil my desire to go hand-in-hand with wife and family to Mount Lu Mên,
Nor in this time of difficulty can I bind a letter to the leg of a wild goose.

Feathered signals of armies overflow Heaven, Earth;
Horns of battle mourn through mountains, down streams.

Even supposing that I return home, can we avoid missing each other on the road?
Dare I delay, postpone our day of meeting?

II

I have already quoted a Chinese saying: 'the history of the times may be read in the poems of Tu Fu.' This characteristic becomes more conspicuous as stirring events succeed rapidly one to the other, and as the Master,

following various movements in minute detail, develops a strong taste for military strategy. The position of affairs at the dawn of Chih Tê, second revolution, was possibly less hopeless than it had been. Ming Huang, it is true, was far away in Szechwan, the Province of Four Streams, and the rebel An Lu-shan was in possession at the Capital of Eternal Peace; but Su Tsung in the far North-west had rallied the people to his standard and was moving South, while the Uighur tribes were coming to his assistance. The lines from 'Years of Strength Travel' which describe this situation read:

Black breath of killing rose at K'ung T'ung Hill;
Yellow the flags and banners beside the Lesser Sea.

Yü the Great, famed for his achievement, also commanded his son to rule;
The Yellow Emperor himself carried warfare to Cho Lu.

Near Western Peak massed Kingfisher Glory,
The Dragon without Horns, the fierce tigers, attempted to devour the ravenous hyenas and wolves.

Not one claw or tooth seized its prey;
At Ch'ên T'ao the soldiers of Hu still maintained their dykes against the flood.

At Ch'ing Fan chariots of Imperial Army were harassed, harassed;
Exhaustion, incurable illness brought on by toil, reached the vitals.

The words 'Kingfisher Glory' refer to the Imperial standards; 'the Lesser Sea' and 'the Dragon without Horns'

suggest the Heir-Apparent before he became the Emperor Su Tsung; the 'tigers' are his generals, while the 'ravenous hyenas and wolves' are the rebels.

On the sixth day of Chih Tê, first revolution, First Moon, Lu-shan was stabbed as he slept by his own son An Ch'ing-hsü, who attempted, unsuccessfully as it turned out, to perfect the work his father had begun. The *T'ang History* records this fact in the following words:

> The son used a great knife, hewed his (Lu-shan's) belly; his bowels gushed out upon the bed; he died. The affair was notorious.

In the Second Moon of the same year, Su Tsung reached the town of Ch'i, only about one hundred miles West of the Capital, and establishing himself there, changed the name to Fêng Hsiang – the Love-pheasant Rises and Wheels in the Air.

The death of Lu-shan brought an access of power to his lieutenants, of whom Shih Ssŭ-ming and Kao Hsiu-yen were at this moment threatening North Shansi and Shênsi. I paraphrase the extract from the *T'ang History*:

> 'Chih Tê, second revolution, First Moon, Shih Ssŭ-ming, Tsai Hsi-tê and Kao Hsiu-yen, leading soldiers, altogether ten times ten thousand men, concentrated on and attacked T'ai Yüan. Shih Ssŭ-ming considered that taking it would be as easy as placing one's fingers in the palm of one's hand, and that once taken, the way would be open to Shuo Fang, the Dark Northern Region.'

Here, although Su Tsung was gathering strength, the situation was very uncertain. Tu Fu's idea is that Lu Tzŭ Kuan, the Reed Pass North of Yen An, which he considered the vulnerable point, should be protected. North of that again stretched the Great Wall, and beyond this massive barrier lay three walled cities established

some years earlier. During the first revolution of Chih Tê the Governor of Shuo Fang, under whose jurisdiction these cities came, begged that he be allowed to enclose with walls the two frontier encampments of Ting Yüan and Fêng An. Permission was granted; thus the Three Cities often referred to in poetry became the Five Cities of Tu Fu's poem. They are described as the 'protecting wings' of Ling Wu where Su Tsung made his stand and which was therefore considered the 'root' of the restoration.

Hsieh, the Great Man of whom Tu Fu speaks, had been appointed Prefect of Fu Fêng, the prefecture where Ch'i, later known as Fêng Hsiang, was situated, and proved himself so capable in controlling and repulsing the local bandits that the highways were not blocked. Envoys from the rich districts of Wu and Yüeh in the South, the granaries of the Empire, were therefore able to reach, consult with and assure the two Emperors, one in Szechwan, the other at Ling Wu, of the loyalty existing in Central China. Tu Fu states his opinion of the situation in the following poem:

BLOCK LU TZŬ PASS

Vol. III, Leaf 14

The Five Cities, how far, far!
Far, far divided from us by the water of the Stream.

Frontier soldiers pass every one to the East;
Within cities desolation, alders, thorns.

Ssŭ-ming cuts off Huai and Wei;
Hsiu-yen at the West is not crushed.

He comes, returning on his tracks to seize the great open spaces;
Therefore from Mount Shao to Han Pass is deserted because the rebels have come West.

Yen Chou is the Northern Gate of Ch'in;
The Pass which guards it is all we can rely on.

How obtain a myriad men
Quickly to go and block Lu Tzŭ Pass?

In Ch'i there is Hsieh, the Great Man,
Who at the side, controls the rebels in the hills from rising.

We heard lately the K'un Jung had advanced;
They have been pushed back three hundred *li*.

The Reed Pass throttles the two rebels;
On this the thoughts deep in my heart are centred.

Who can tell the Emperor to close the door?
How travel to him, swift as a spirit?

A long commentary at the end of the poem reads in part:

> Availing ourselves of rhymed words as a substitute for an analytical report to the Emperor, we shall understand thoroughly and comprehend in every particular the appearance of the time and realize with what an anxious heart this old man has drawn up his plans.
>
> Those who read it ripely, who study this type of verse, how can (they) consider poems without use, and the making of poems to be an idle matter? Chu Ho-ling says the principal theme of this poem is a discussion of the Five Cities, and a lament that Shuo Fang, the Dark North Region, is without preparation. Kao Hsiu-yen and Shih Ssŭ-ming, two rebels, unite strength, attack T'ai Yüan; then ford

the stream, come West to Yen Chou frontier; go out to the North to the Five Cities of Dark Region. There are six hundred *li* dividing Ling Wu from Yen Chou.

Ling Wu has become the root and stalk of returning prosperity. The Master thinks perhaps the two rebels will avail themselves of chance and seize an opportunity; for this reason he desires ten thousand men to guard Lu Kuan, the Reed Pass, to divide the forces so that the two rebels will not seize the North. At this time T'ai Yüan was nearly unprotected; fortunately Lu-shan died; Ssŭ-ming, moving, returned to Fan Yang. The situation very hazardous, hazardous. The Master therefore thinks deeply and anxiously about it.

Military strategy was not the only subject which Tu Fu studied during the months of his captivity. It so happened that a certain Ts'an, a Buddhist priest who was the Abbot of the Ta Yün Shih, the Great Cloud Temple situated in one of the Western Precincts of the city, was an intimate friend of Fang Kuan, the general who had met such crushing defeat at Ch'ên T'ao Marsh, but whom Tu Fu nevertheless sincerely admired. That their common admiration for Fang Kuan brought Tu Fu and Ts'an together in the first place is a mere conjecture on my part; at all events the two men became fast friends, and Tu Fu took refuge in the temple on more than one occasion, thus concealing himself from the agents of the rebel leader who would willingly have pressed him into service.

It were possible to write many descriptive notes in amplification of these four poems on the Great Cloud Temple, which was decorated with dragon pictures by Wu Tao-tzŭ of whom I have already spoken, but I must refrain. Tu Fu refers to these pictures in the second poem, and cites a popular belief to the effect that when rain falls the dragon's scales are wet.

Mr. Nung, who has been a guest in many *shih*, which are temples and monasteries combined, described the procedure connected with the priestly life in great detail. As he spoke, I seemed to see the rows of monks, sometimes as many as six hundred, three hundred on each side of the hall, assembled silently at long tables before their tasteless meal of rice and vegetables, while the Abbot sat alone in the centre at a little table covered with a green and red cloth and faced by a Sacred Image. The various priests referred to are all famous men of earlier days, whose names Tu Fu uses figuratively and in a complimentary manner, to suggest his host, the Abbot Ts'an.

TS'AN KUNG'S ROOM IN TA YÜN, THE GREAT CLOUD

Vol. III, Leaf 14

I

My heart within Domain of Crystal Doctrine,
My robe damp in Season of Spring Rain.

I walk slowly through doors placed in a line,
In order to keep, deep within walled enclosure,
a secret appointment.

I reach an inner door; it is opened, closed again;
A bell is struck; now is the hour of repast.

For a long time Buddha's mercy has caused the
true nature of his followers to unfold;
The food, the drink, are verily a support in my
weakness.

For many days we wander arm in arm;
I open my breast without shame or reserve.

A yellow oriole darts past the lovely pavilion;
A purple dove drops from the eave nets.

My dull intelligence has thus met peace;
Beside the flowers I pace how slowly!

The priest, T'ang Hsiu, has lifted up my illness,
With a shadowy smile he asks me to write poems.

II

Fine, pliable, the plaited hemp-thread shoes;
Shining bright the silky white cloth cap;

Wrapped up, stored away, ready for an old scholar;
Taken out, used to put upon my person.

I look at myself; things are reversed, they are not as they should be;
But why should I refuse these clothes as though our cherished friendship were but new?

The priest Tao Lin has talents unequalled in the world;
The priest Hui Yüan is endowed with virtue beyond other men.

Rain falls at sunset on the bamboos by the eaves;
Wind blows in Spring through the bonewort by the well.

The sky is dark, the painted frescoes balance each other;
My senses sharpened, I am aware the dragon's scales are wet.

III

The lamp shines down on me and casts black shadows; I do not sleep,
But, heart at peace, inhale sweet scent of incense.

Night is deep; hall towers high;
Wind shakes gold bells and discs.

Black night encloses courtyard: it is Spring Season;
In the darkness clear pool exhales flower fragrance.

The constellation Jade Cord revolves, cut in half
by the roof of the hall;
Aloft the iron love-pheasant soars, wheels in the
air.

At times a sound of Buddhist ritual floats from
the temple;
The dying notes of a bell re-echo by my bed.

On the bright morrow I shall be in the fertile
fields
And shall grieve to see the dust, the yellow sand.

IV

At dawn young boys draw the Glory of the
Well;
Skilful, quick, water-pitchers in their hands,

They sprinkle, moisten, but do not soak the
earth;
So clean they sweep as 'twere by no mere broom.

Bright glow of dawn illuminates storied pavilion;
I open the long windows; mist rises; it is clear
weather after rain.

Leaning, spreading flowers conceal the little
path;
Swaying, waving willows bow in wind below the
porch.

The rebel leader would force me to undertake the
difficulty and toil of State affairs,
But after the fortunate meeting with you I with-
drew and kept out of sight.

Face to face we have talked, our deep thoughts
in harmony;
How is it possible now to seal my lips for ever?

On leaving I hand back the staff I leant on;
The separation will be short, I shall soon turn
my head.

Drifting, drifting! mud sullies the person;
Yapping, yapping! many dogs are in the
country!

If I cannot avoid being lassoed and bridled,
I will at times flee here to rest.

To be with my Lord is like being near white snow,
But – whether or no, I must lay hold of, grasp, the blazing fires of perplexity.

There remain but three poems connected with this period. 'Rejoice, it is Clear After Rain' is long, full of allusions and, except for one line, of slight personal interest – although Tu Fu does remark:

My hunger! can it be that it is without limit?

Another describes a meeting with Chêng Ch'ien, the impractical, idealistic, irresponsible Kuang Wên to whom Tu Fu was devoted but who had been forced by the rebels to perform administrative work of sorts; and with Chêng, the Imperial son-in-law, to whose garden the three men proceeded. They express gratitude at being alive and betray by an allusion their knowledge of Lu-shan's death. The third I quote, nor does it call for comment on my part.

VISITING SU TUAN IN THE RAIN

Vol. III, Leaf 15

A cock crows, wind and rain mingle;
After long drought clouds are welcome.

My thorn staff sinks into Spring mud;
Having no food, I have risen early.

Walking past each house I think of its inhabitants;
With some I have eaten once, now my foot-prints are swept away.

I often cross to Lord Su,
And each time he is overwhelmed with joy and pleasure.

I can reciprocate; he is a person one can like:
He calls his son to make ready pears and dates,

Thick unstrained spirits are placed as a matter of course before my eyes;
As usual elated by wine, I expound thoughts with which my heart is pregnant.

The eaves of his house are covered with rose-red blossoms;
The angle of his wall is hidden by jade-green grass.

I, the welcome guest, indulge in fanciful tales and fiery words of intimacy;
Talk and laughter comfort in weakness and old age.

Moreover, I am grateful for the copious rain which brings moisture and fertility as it falls;
I, myself, will probably have nourishment, rice and rations,

But my wife, my household, divided from me by armies and encampments,
Expelled, abandoned . . . ? to speak or think of them is beyond endurance.

In the Fourth Moon, during the heat of early summer, after this visit to Su Tuan, Tu Fu eludes the vigilance of his captors, escapes, and makes his way to the Travelling Palace at Fêng Hsiang.

PART XV

Tu Fu the Censor

I. ARRIVAL AT THE TRAVELLING PALACE; CHIH TÊ SECOND REVOLUTION, SIXTH MOON, TO CH'IEN YÜAN, FIRST YEAR,[1] *SIXTH MOON.* A.D. 757–758

JOY AT GOING TO THE TRAVELLING PALACE

Vol. III, Leaf 16

I

(*Still Captive in Ch'ang An*)

I hanker for a letter from Ch'i Yang in the West,
But not a soul finds it possible now to return thence.

Towards the setting sun my eyes bore through space;
Like cold ashes, my dead heart.

(*On the Road*)

As I go, mist weaves through trees; guides, leads me on;
Looking to the distance, I see hills in an unbroken line: suddenly they open!

(*At the Travelling Palace*)

My intimates are startled by my haggard emaciation:
The result of bitter impotence at being held by brigands.

[1] When the *nien hao* was altered in the Second Moon of Chih Tê, second revolution, the term 'year' was re-introduced.

II

Crescent moon sets, Hu Barbarians play flageolets;
tragic thoughts fill heart and head;
It is Spring, but the Royal Park of Han is chilly,
desolate.

I come back alive; this day I realize it is true!
On the lonely pathways man's life seemed the
matter of a moment.

As if for the first time, I gaze at officials who
carry out the ceremonial at Court;
Here at Nan Yang my bearing is already ani-
mated.

Joy in my heart attains its last extremity; revul-
sion follows;
I sigh, gulp down my sobs; tears wet my cap-
strings.

III

Had I gone to my death, who could have known
or proclaimed the fact?
I have come back and for the first time feel pity
for myself.

Looking up at the snow on T'ai Pai Hills,
I rejoice at meeting Heaven in Wu Kung Dis-
trict.

My form in repose among the one thousand
officials,
My heart comes to life before the High Ministers.

To-day dawn audience is held at the Altar of
Earth and the Altar to Grain;
It is destined that this shall be the year of
restoration.

Escape by devious ways under a blazing summer sun is by no means an easy matter: Tu Fu arrived at Fêng Hsiang a pitiful figure and appeared before Su Tsung in rags. My readers will remember that the Master had held a minor appointment in the Heir Apparent's residence before disaster had overtaken the dynasty. That same Heir Apparent, now ruling at his father's request, was deeply touched when he realized the difficulties and dangers his servant had surmounted, and speedily appointed Tu Fu to the honourable post of Censor, that unique office which has been filled by some of the most respected men in China. The rescript confirming this appointment was speedily issued, and the 'Censor of the Left, Tu Fu,' in company with other censors of the Left and Right, appeared at audience, 'raising his two hands in respect,' and 'striking his head upon the ground,' on the twelfth day of the Sixth Moon.

His duty to the Son of Heaven and to the State discharged and his official career thus embarked upon, Tu Fu's thoughts turn immediately to his wife and children, from whom he has heard nothing since he parted from them the autumn before. The spectre of that fate which is to a Chinese the very peak of bitterness, I mean the possibility of a childless old age with the resulting certainty of becoming a lonely untended spirit in the World of Shade, rose continually in Tu Fu's mind.

Vol. III, Leaf 17

Last year the Lofty Barrier was shattered,
For many long days wife, children, have been cut off, divided from me.

During the present Summer, when grass, trees, are deep, thick,
My poor body escapes; on foot I arrive at the West.

In plaited hemp slippers I come before the Son of Heaven;
Both elbows are through the sleeves of my coat.

Officers who attend dawn audience pity me although I have come back alive;
My intimate, my dear old friends, are wounded by my aged, my hideous appearance.

Tears of gratitude flow; I hold the post of Censor!
The favour of the Lord towards the homeless wanderer is deep.

Although I may now go to my thorn branch gate,
I cannot endure to open my mouth at once to ask for leave.

I will send a writing to enquire for my family at Three Rivers;
I do not know whether my household is in being or not.

Shall I hear that all are netted in calamity, disaster?
Killing, slaughter, have reached even chickens, dogs.

At my leaky grass hut, high in the hills,
Who still leans on the sill, gazing through the window?

Fallen, severed, the hoary pine stems;
Bones not yet rotted on the frozen ground.

How many people will fulfil their destiny, complete their span of life?
Can it be that my whole household is every one alive?

Isolated mountain peaks are fierce tiger places,
Heart knotted in fear, even I turn my head.

Myself I sent a folded writing,
Ten Moons and more have passed since then;

My longing for tidings has turned to dread of the news that may come –
What fear lurks in my inch of heart?

The dynasty of Han has accomplished a revolution in its destiny, the moment of restored prosperity arrives;
I have lived my life, I am old; I console myself with wine.

Deep in my heart I long to enjoy a place of reunion with my family:
Perhaps I shall die a poverty-stricken, solitary greybeard!

It being impossible, as Tu Fu states, to ask at once for leave of absence, he sends a writing to the village near Fu Chou where he has left the household, and to his unspeakable relief receives a reply. In the poem which records this fact he refers to the curious Chinese belief that fish derive their being from heavy rain.

I RECEIVE A WRITING FROM MY HOME

Vol. III, Leaf 17

The message which went out I entrusted to a passing traveller;
The writing which he brought was sent from home.

This very day the news I longed for has been wafted to me,
In a strange country I can live at peace.

Fortunately my son, Brave Bear, has no ailments,
Nor has Thoroughbred Horse, the little boy whom I love so dearly.

I envisage old age; held here, I reach the limits of loneliness;
In this time of sorrow I can seldom be united to my family.

When I arrived at the Tent Audience Hall my hair was of two colours;
One command! I became an official and followed the Firebird Chariot.

Uncanny evil aura pervades Northern Palace pillars;
White Dew Season sets in on Western open lands.

In the cool wind wild geese migrate anew;
From Autumn rain fish will soon come to life.

Farmers' affairs among the lonely hills:
I love to say, 'In the end I'll bear a hoe across my back.'

II. THE MATTER CONCERNING FANG KUAN; CHIH TÊ, SECOND REVOLUTION, SIXTH MOON. A.D. 757

Tu Fu is no sooner appointed to the post of Censor than he finds a serious matter requiring remonstrance on his part. Fang Kuan, a friend of his 'cotton-clad' days, is in danger of disgrace if not of death, and all because of the unfortunate disasters at Ch'ên T'ao and Ch'ing Fan.

In order to understand why Tu Fu felt the affair as strongly as he did, it is necessary to consider Fang Kuan's previous career, his self-sacrificing loyalty and his well-deserved reputation as a just and beloved administrator. I can only beg my readers to turn up his name in the Biographical Index for details of this same career. At Ch'ên T'ao, Fang Kuan had used the tactics described in the Spring and Autumn Annals. In the centre of his troops were placed two thousand ox-carts, flanked on either side by cavalry and infantry. At the moment of battle Fang Kuan did not have what the Chinese call *t'ien shih ti li*, the moment appointed by Heaven, the good-fortune of earth; that is, he had a contrary wind

and his troops were caught in a low and unfavourable place. The rebels were above him. An Lu-shan's myriad galloping horses raised a whirlwind of dust which concealed their numbers, the shouts of his fierce warriors as they advanced blew down wind upon the armies of Fang Kuan, the oxen took fright and stampeded, causing appalling confusion, which was added to by the fact that Lu-shan threw burning straw among the Imperial troops, who were slain by the hundred. Four times ten thousand men were killed; but a pitiful remnant survived.

There could be no minimizing the gravity of this disaster, and probably Tu Fu would not have defended Fang Kuan's tactics; he felt however that a man of such noble character, one who had rendered such valuable services to the State, and one moreover who came forward ready to receive punishment – the histories relate that Fang Kuan hurried at once to the Travelling Palace and knelt before the Emperor with the bared back of a condemned criminal – should not suffer unduly. Furthermore, the blame could not be placed on Kuan alone. He had been urged to battle by officials near the Emperor. His emotions, therefore, roused to the highest pitch, Tu Fu remonstrated with the Emperor and pled eloquently for Fang Kuan, nor from his own account did he exercise great tact in the matter. Perhaps the line in 'Years of Strength Travel' regarding the Imperial Couch should not be taken too literally, but Tu Fu was certainly importunate and – 'the Above One felt rage.'

I, the Censor, expressed my humble criticism to
the One who wore the Dragon Robe;
Grief, anger, rose in His heart as a bird rises on
spread wings.

I felt distress for the Above One because His
Ancestral Temple had been consumed by fire;
My heart mourned for the Ten Thousand Clans
who suffered the ulcer of poverty.

At this time I knelt, my head on the Green Rush
Mat,
And before Imperial Couch remonstrated as in
Audience Hall.

'We men of learning are also to blame; dare we
for love of self fear death?'
Ruler's anger blazed! fortunately I suffered no
injury.

Enlightened One is wise; he treated me mercifully
and forgave;
To the District Beneath the Canopy of Space a
semblance of peace returned.

An inquiry into Tu Fu's conduct by three High Officers was speedily ordered, and had it not been for the intervention of the Minister Chang Hao, it is impossible to tell how dire might have been the result. The power the Son of Heaven exercised over his officials was absolute: life and death were in his hands. Upon this occasion Chang Hao succeeded in placating Su Tsung, the inquiry was avoided, and Tu Fu writes a *chuang* or statement of thanks for favours received. It is, necessarily, couched in conventional terms. Tu Fu describes himself as 'a dolt,' one who has but 'a monkey's wit'; one who 'entangled in the net of guilt deserves death; entangled in the net of guilt deserves death'; he clings, however, to his opinion that Fang Kuan's faithful service to the State, in his earlier years, deserves recognition and should pro-

tect him from condemnation for a well-meant mistake, and ends his thanks to Chang Hao with the words: 'may great prosperity persist in All-Below-the-Sky; may great prosperity persist in All-Below-the-Sky.'

His behaviour in this matter concerning Fang Kuan is an accurate index to Tu Fu's honesty of purpose at whatever cost in suffering to himself. His countrymen describe the affair as his *ta chieh* or 'great chastity,' using the word, as they often do, to describe inviolate administrative honour.

III. DUTIES AT THE TRAVELLING PALACE; CHIH TÊ, SECOND REVOLUTION, SUMMER. A.D. 757

The most urgent matter requiring the attention of Heaven and his Ministers, was the stabilizing of the administration in the parts of the country from which the evil odour of the Mongol hordes had been cleansed; and we find Tu Fu writing poems of farewell to various officials as they start to take up their duties in new posts. These poems are more interesting from an historical than from an autobiographical point of view, and I do not feel justified in quoting them all; one will serve as an example:

TAKING LEAVE OF LI, THE P'AN KUAN OF LING CHOU

Vol. III, Leaf 21

'When Lu-shan rebelled, caused Kŭo Tzŭ-i to become T'ai Shou of Ling Wu. He was acting as Commander-in-Chief of Northern Armies when defeat at Ch'ên T'ao took place. Therefore Emperor depended on Northern Armies as on root and stock.'

(Commentary from the *T'ang Shu.*)

The evil odour of the Chieh Hu hordes stretches
to Four Seas;
I turn my head towards the vast open spaces.

Blood of battle: earth below Heaven is vermilion;
Breath of miasma: sun, bright moon, are yellow.

Commander in Chief attends to but one object:
his stratagem and plans for killing;
You, Sir, of the Record Office, in a tent, are of
outstanding talent, merit.

I congratulate the Lord of the Restoration,
That his soldiers in the Dark North Region,
filled with superhuman ardour, now move!

Unfortunately the re-organization of the Court itself was such as to cause Tu Fu and men of like mind grave anxiety. Yang Kuei-fei, it is true, was dead, and the flowers of Yang had fallen indeed. Kao Li-shih, all-powerful eunuch as he had been, was with the Bright Emperor in Szechwan, far beyond the steep peaks of the Two-edged Sword Mountains; but here at Fêng Hsiang the Lady Chang ruled the Son of Heaven, and the eunuch Li Fu-kuo bid fair to outdo even Kao Li-shih in arrogance. As the Autumn season draws near, Tu Fu writes a little poem which seems harmless to the uninitiated, but in which he refers to the lady and the eunuch who are carrying on the evil tradition in the terms of moon-lore. The *ch'an* or three-legged toad, which lives in the moon, suggests Chang Liang-ti, and the rabbit, an inhabitant of the same region, Li Fu-kuo. The last line alludes to the Chinese idea that on a night of full moon, symbol of conjugal bliss, man and wife should be together, and that therefore moonlight but increases homesickness.

十三 第一集 第下册

MOON

Vol. IV, Leaf 1

In Heaven above the Autumn season draws near;
Moon shadows are bright within the precincts of men.

The moon-toad is not dead, it lies reflected on the surface of the water;
The rabbit still lives; with pestle and mortar it prepares drugs of immortality in the moon.

This brilliance but increases the bitterness in my cinnabar heart,
And only adds to the silver threads on my white head.

Shields, spears, fill earth to overflowing – this I know,
No moon should shine above the encampments of our soldiers to the West.

As a matter of fact Court regulations were being ignored in what Tu Fu considered a shameless manner; men of high rank were mingling with under-secretaries in a way they should not do, and even eunuchs were appearing in positions where no eunuchs should be. Tu Fu speaks very clearly on the subject in a little poem which he writes to Yen Wu, a brilliant youth whose father Tu Fu had known well. This same Yen Wu, who was a friend of Fang Kuan, is to play a very important part in Tu Fu's later life, but we hear no more of him at present. Tu Fu closes the poem of which I speak with the following lines:

Your new poems line by line are good,
You should rely on the old man to give you instruction;

the 'old man' being Tu Fu himself!

And so the weeks went by; and there can hardly have been a moment in the history of the Central Flowery Kingdom – to use the indigenous idiom for the name of the country we call 'China' – when wealth and emolument were more easily commanded than during the days when Tu Fu, a poverty-stricken genius, passed through the land.

An inquiry into his conduct had been avoided, it is true, but Tu Fu was 'branded with ink,' that is, his fault was recorded, and he found no manner of difficulty in obtaining leave of absence to go and visit his family. He started in the intercalary Eighth Moon for the village of Ch'iang Tsun, near Fu Chou, and leaves us many details regarding the journey, which he began on foot: a state of affairs which he altered, however, by commandeering a horse from a rich young man, living in Pin Chou, who possessed a thousand steeds or more.

TRAVELLING BY NIGHT; SINGING AT THE TOP OF MY LUNGS

Vol. IV, Leaf 1

I can not reach Three Streams;
It is late; hills on the return road are many.

The wild goose drops as a dead leaf drops, and floats on cold waters;
Starving birds perch on frontier gate towers.

Nowadays men of the market-place, men of the Court, are all newcomers;
In how many days will mourning, chaos, cease?

I am mortified not to equal Chiang Tsung of the Liang dynasty:
I return to my household with an ink-black head.

ALONE; POURING WINE; COMPLETING A POEM

Vol. IV, Leaf 1

A lamp flower – what great good fortune!
The green wine – verily it is my beloved!

I am stimulated by the wine; as I follow the wanderer's road,
I write a poem, aware of inspiration.

Before my eyes only soldiers, spears;
Can a scholar, an artist, scheme to make a living!

I, a minor official, am bound to poverty;
I hang my head, mortified among the country louts.

TRAVELLING ON FOOT; RETURNING HOME

Vol. IV, Leaf 2

You, Sir, in your days of youth and strength, have met with dangerous times; your intelligence bright as sun and moon
Is an aid to the administration; the courageous vigour of your bearing is a very real comfort to the people.

Altars of State to the Spirits of Earth, to the Spirits of Grain, are now restored;
The tangle of calamity, the fierce fighting, have ceased; if it be not you, Sir, who has done this thing?

The one thousand officials at Fêng Hsiang are now properly nourished,
But fat horses, light fur robes, are not yet within their reach.

I, the scholar who at Court wear a green official coat, am the most poverty-stricken of all;
I, the Censor, my head snow-white, travel towards home on foot.

In man's life, the bonds which endure, the friendships which unite, know neither age nor youth;
Why must intimate association precede the wheel of discussion which revolves from heart to heart?

High in the hills my wife, my children, look up to Heaven and weep:
I need, from your Honour's stable, a horse, a dappled black and yellow, like deathless 'Pursue the Wind.'

ON A JOURNEY, HALTING AT CHAO LING

Vol. IV, Leaf 5

According to ancient custom, when weary of a selfish ruler,
The multitude of aspirants to power convict the 'Lone Man' who is absorbed only in his own interests,

And prophesy that one whose substance is of the Dragon and the Love-pheasant, will return
To re-erect in majesty the Capitals of the Tiger to the West, of the Wolf to the East.

He who is linked with Heaven must follow the rule of Yao;
His divine handiwork must be allied to the plan of Yü.

The purest ethics should be wafted by winds of earth and clouds of Heaven;
The sun, the moon, should pursue their continuous course on the high pathway of the sky.

Standards of ritual must follow ancient ways,
Then will the Audience Hall be thronged by men at the meridian of life, steeped in the teaching of K'ung the Sage,

Who by blunt reproof, risk contempt and death,
Nor consider steep or dangerous the hilly road of the upright man.

Fire and flood of disaster, resulting from the past, still come down from Heaven;
The people of the one hundred surnames gasp for breath and have not yet regained consciousness.

Imperial Edicts direct that peace return to the country,
That rebellion be scoured away, and the great brazier of disorder be controlled.

I, a man in full strength, grieve beside the grave mound;
Men in retirement worship at Ting Lake.

Jade garments rise at dawn of their own accord;
Stone horses perspire after violent exertion.

Pine trees, cypress trees, wave above empty Tomb Hall;
Dust and rising sand darken the road I follow.

Such days as dawned with the dynasty are gone;
The spirit of T'ai Tsung lets the stream of his resentment overflow the hills.

Near the Nine Peak Hill in the District of Li Ch'üan, stands the tomb of the great T'ai Tsung, founder of the T'ang dynasty, and in front of this tomb, carved in high

relief, stood sculptured portraits of his six favourite horses; two of these are now in the University Museum, Philadelphia, and replica may be seen in the British Museum. On his journey North, Tu Fu stops beside the grave and grieves: his experience at the Travelling Palace had certainly been disheartening. He refers to several charming legends and to the popular belief that the spirit of T'ai Tsung had led hosts of ghostly soldiers to assist in the repulse of Lu-shan, and that the stone horses had been found streaming with perspiration after their exertions.

At the hamlet in the loess country the Tu family is once more united.

CH'IANG TSUN: THE HAMLET OF ELEGANCE

Vol. IV, Leaf 2

I

Clouds to the West are hills overtopping one another, a vermilion glory of fire and height;
The sun's foot has dropped below the level earth.

Large birds, small birds, twitter at my rustic gate;
The traveller returns home; he arrives from a thousand *li*.

Wife, children, marvel that I am alive:
First startled, then comforted, yet again they dry their tears.

The world is in confusion, I have blown on the whirlwind and floated on vast waters;
That I return alive is the result of mere accident.

Neighbours and friends crowd to overflowing the top of our wall;
Their emotions are roused; they sigh, snivel and blow their noses, they whimper and sob.

Late at night we still grasp candles:
We are together – do we sleep and dream?

II

In my later years I am driven by circumstance; I have stolen my life;
I have returned home, but the joys, the pleasures are few.

The sons I am so proud of will not leave my knee,
They fear I will go out again from the family circle.

Formerly I remember, I liked to seek the cool breeze;
I make a circuit therefore under the trees on the edge of the pond.

The strong North wind whistles *hsiao! hsiao!*
I think of many matters; a hundred anxieties simmer in my mind.

I know that I can depend on receiving ripe grain and glutinous millet;
Already, I am aware, wine has flowed from the sediment in the wine press.

Enough wine has been poured out and drunk, and now, as ever,
Its use has soothed the late sunset of my life.

III

Certainly the flock of chickens are clucking in a flutter:
Guests have arrived; the birds fight, peck one another.

I drive them into the trees,
When first I hear a knock on the thorn gate.

Old fathers, four or five persons,
Ask me about my prolonged far-off travels.

Each one is carrying something in his hand;
We turn upside down the wooden cup; thick wine, then clear spirits.

They repeat again and again: 'The flavour of the wine is poor;
There is not a soul to plough the ground for the glutinous millet.

'Since soldiers have not yet stopped their slaying,
Young men and boys have all gone to the East.'

I ask to be allowed to chant a poem about the old fathers;
In this time of difficulty and distress I feel unworthy of their deep sympathy.

The poem ended, sighing, I turn my face to Heaven;
Tears stream and drench the faces of the old men who sit on the four sides.

After his arrival at Ch'iang Tsun, where he remains for a number of weeks, Tu Fu writes a poem which is one of

the longest and most famous in Chinese literature. Chin Shêng-t'an, whom in this case I have followed, has edited a collection of Tu Fu's works with elaborate annotations. He divides the one hundred and forty lines of this poem into thirty-five sections, and states that the portions from sections sixteen to twenty-three, when the poet speaks of wife and family, are as if spoken in a dream, and ends by saying that his emotions when reading the poem were so poignant that tears could but flow.

TRAVELLING TO THE NORTH

Vol. IV, Leaf 3

I

Autumn, second year of Sovereign Lord:
Auspicious First Day, intercalary Eighth Moon;

I, son of the Tu Clan, am about to proceed North
To enquire for my family, my household, of whom my knowledge is empty as the vast, the azure sky.

II

It is a time when we must meet anxiety of reconstruction;
Days of leisure for men who hold office, for men out of office, are rare.

I am overcome with confusion at the Imperial favour I alone enjoy;
An Edict permits my return to the poor hut among thistles and beans.

III

I raise my two hands in reverence and withdraw; I pause beyond the Great Gateway to Sovereign Power;
Apprehensive, fearful, I do not go out from the Palace Enclosure for a long time.

Although I have failed in handing up the advice, in administering the reproof demanded by my standing,
I fear my Lord may be forgetful and neglect his duties.

IV

Verily my Lord is a Ruler who has risen from among others;
The warp and woof of his learning are firm and regular; they inspire effort.

Rebellion of the Eastern Barbarians is not yet ended;
I, Officer Fu, am filled with ardent zeal.

V

Brushing away my tears, I long for the Presence in the Travelling Palace;
I follow my road, still unable to collect my scattered thoughts.

On this earth which stretches below the Heavens everyone suffers starvation, injury;
Sorrow, danger, at what hour will it end?

VI

Slowly, slowly, I traverse roads leading North and
South, paths running East and West;
Hearth smoke is rare; desolation! loneliness!

Men I meet all suffer wounds;
Blood still flows; there is groaning, moaning.

VII

I turn my head to the District of Fêng Hsiang,
Wheeling Love-pheasant;
In the sunset light banners, flags, are bright,
then vanish.

VIII

I climb cold hills which rise before me one after
one;
I water my horse many times at holes in the
ground.

I drop to low land in the outskirts of Pin,
Where Ching River joins the rushing Yü.

IX

Fierce tiger stands before me;
When he roars, the green precipice cracks.

Gold chrysanthemum flowers are fading now;
Ancient tracks of chariot wheels scar the rocks.

X AND XI

Nevertheless my spirits rise, I am elated, clouds
drive across the blue;
A life of solitude can also bring delight.

吳友如畫寶 古今人物圖 二 第一集第下冊

Innumerable minute delicate hill fruits
Grow, spread like a net over a tangle of chestnuts
and acorns;

Some red like cinnabar ore,
Some black like drops of lacquer.

Rain and dew nourish them;
Sweet, bitter, alike form their fruit.

I ponder deeply on the Peach Blossom Fountain
country,
And sigh the more heavily over the ill-success of
my life's journey.

XII

From hump-backed paths on slope of hill I gaze far
off to mound of worship in Fu Prefecture;
The hollow beds of torrents, sheer precipices, appear
and disappear in turn.

I hurry on; I reach the water's edge;
My serving-man is still among the tree-tops.

XIII

A sad owl hoots in the yellow mulberries;
Field mice rout out, prepare their winter holes.

Late at night we cross level land where battle
shouts have rung;
A cold moon reflects from white bones.

XIV

Within Lofty Barrier Pass a hundred times a
myriad soldiers
Fought in days gone by: who brought them final
defeat?

Who gave the command which caused half the
Clans of Ch'in
To be injured, destroyed, to become beings of a
different order?

XV

I, too, am changed; I fell into the Barbarians'
dust
And reach home, every hair streaked with white.

XVI

More than a year ago we first came to the thatched hut;
Now, on my return, my wife's, my children's clothes, are tied in a hundred knots.

Startled at seeing each other, our hearts leap, we cry in unison with the soughing pines;
The sad sound of flowing water blends with our stifled sobs.

XVII

The children, of whom I have their life long been so proud,
Whose complexion surpassed the colour of snow in purity,

Seeing their father, weep silent tears and turn away their faces;
They are dirty, greasy, and wear no sandals on their feet.

XVIII

In front of the bed, are two little girls;
Their clothes, torn and patched, barely pass the knee.

From the sea-picture bordering my robe I tear waves, billows;
I alter the position of the old embroidery, fold it here, turn it there.

Purple love-pheasant, and water-sprite, half tiger, half man,
Are turned upside down on the short coarse woollen coats.

XIX

I, the honourable old scholar, harbour passionate resentment;
I lie several days vomiting, purging;

No money in my hard-bottomed bag: what is to be done?
How save you from the cold? you shiver, tremble with fear.

XX AND XXI

Powder, black eye-stone, are taken from their wrappings;
The large quilts, the single coverlets, although few, are folded and arranged.

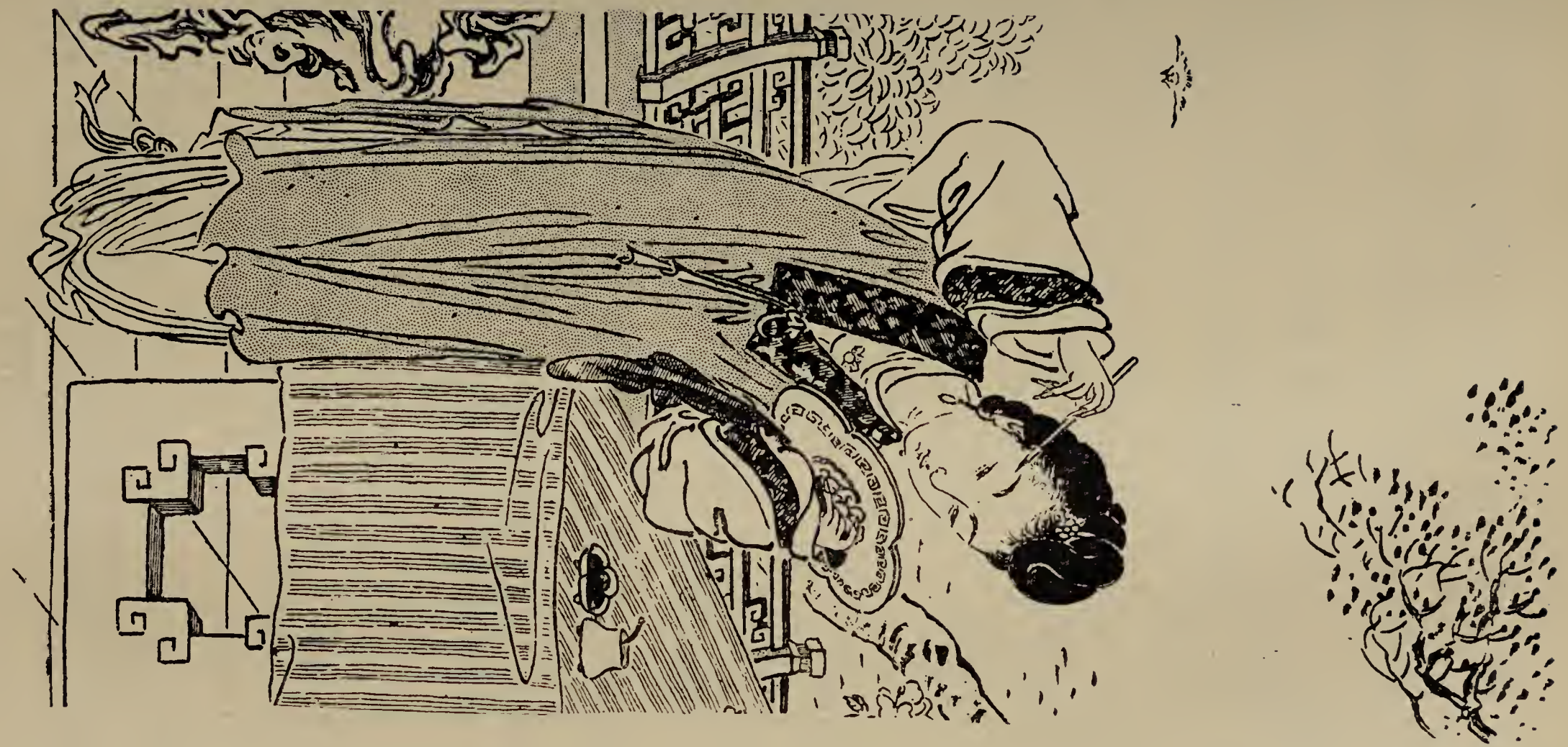
Light returns to the emaciated face of my wife;
The girls, idiotic little things, comb their own hair.

Copying their mother, there is nothing they do not attempt:
They rub on the early-morning make-up as it comes to hand;

After a time they use vermilion and white lead powder,
And in wild confusion draw themselves broad eyebrows.

XXII AND XXIII

Come back alive, united to my little boys and girls,
I almost seem forgetful of their hunger, thirst.



They vie with one another, ask questions about
my adventures, pull my beard:
Who could be angry and scold at such a moment?

I think back on my grief when with the
brigands,
And am willing to endure much clamour and
confusion.

Newly returned home, I make the best of every-
thing, I soothe their fears;
How can I discuss the difficulties of making a
living?

XXIV

The most Venerable One is still enveloped in dust
far from his Capital:
In how many days will he cease from drilling
soldiers?

Lifting my head, I see the colour of the sky has
altered;
I realize that the threatening atmosphere at the
edge of Heaven has cleared.

XXV

Cold wind blows from West North;
Cruel disturbance of the people will follow the
coming of the Uighurs;

Although their King is willing to assist and
comply with the orders of our Ruler,
Their custom is to rejoice in rushing to attack.

XXVI AND XXVII

The troops they send number five thousand men,
Who urge, drive on, ten thousand horses.

Of this class the fewer would be the better:
The Four Quarters are already submitting to our bold decision on the fields of battle.

The Uighurs to be used are keen as falcons wheeling in the air,
And long to destroy the enemy with the speed of a passing arrow.

The heart of the Enlightened One is given much to indecision;
Endless deliberation must rob men of their ardour.

XXVIII

To recapture Lo Yang on the River I would be as easy as pointing to one's palm;
To take the West Capital could not equal pulling up a weed;

Imperial troops beg they be allowed to enter deep in the rebel ranks;
They assemble their most valiant and wait upon concerted effort.

XXIX

Then we could undertake to open up Ch'ing and Hsü,
To speedily recapture and regard with reverence the tablet on Mount Hêng.

The Great Ruler Above piles up frost and snow,
The aura of the universe in its majesty deals out death.

XXX

The curses of Heaven have taken a turn: gone the years of the Barbarian;
Change is complete, we grasp the moon of Hu.

Can the life of those Hu now last long?
It is not right that the rope which guides the net of our Sovereign's law should be cut short.

XXXI, XXXII AND XXXIII [1]

I think of yesterday when the jackal and the lynx first appeared;
Their doings differed from those of early ancient years;

Upon this occasion the faithless officer was immediately minced and pickled;
His spirit and that of his confederate in evil are snapped from their ancestral tree and wander homeless.

[1] In these three sections Tu Fu hopefully compares the present with the past: the 'jackal' and 'lynx' are Yang Kuei-fei and Yang Kuo-chung who, evil as they were, have not brought about the complete collapse of the dynasty as did Pao (Ssŭ) and Ta (Chi), frivolous beauties of the Hsia and Yin dynasties. Upon this occasion Kuo-chung has been 'minced and pickled,' Kuei-fei is dead, and there is hope that wise officers and brave men like General Ch'ên Hsüan-li will be able to secure peace; furthermore Tu Fu hopes that the Bright Emperor and his son Su Tsung will bring about a restoration as did King Hsüan of the Chou dynasty and the Emperor Kuang, founder of the later Han.

We do not hear that Hsia and Yin were destroyed;
In the midst of their course Pao and Ta were done away with.

Chou and Han were able to arrest disaster and prosper a second time;
Hsüan, Kuang, were assuredly brilliant, wise.

Martial, valorous, is Commanding General Ch'ên;
Loyal patriots are roused to seize their arms, their halberds with crescent blades.

There is no alternative, the people would otherwise be annihilated;
Now the State still lives.

XXXIV

Cold, miserable, Ta T'ung Hall;
Deserted, silent, Pai Shou Gate.

Men in the Capital look for the Kingfisher Glory,
Breath of Good Fortune approaches the Gold Pillar.

XXXV

There are surely spirits in the Grave Enclosure;
The graves must be frequently, not seldom, swept and sprinkled.

Bright shines the Sovereign, bright shines the Sovereign, the descendant of T'ai Tsung;
He stands erect, a lofty tree; his prosperity spreads to the wide spaces.

While Tu Fu had been travelling North, the Imperial soldiers, under the command of Prince Kuang P'ing, the

Heir Apparent, and the great Kuo Tzŭ-i, saviour of the dynasty, had been pushing East from Fêng Hsiang towards the Capital, and Tu Fu hears with joy that they approach the walls of Ch'ang An.

HEAR WITH JOY IMPERIAL SOLDIERS ALREADY BEHOLD DISTRICT HELD BY REBELS[1]

Vol. IV, Leaf 6

Hu Lo Barbarians hide in Capital City District;
Imperial soldiers throng rebel trenches.

A fish in the cauldron is deluded in thinking it merely rests:
Can an ant in its hole evade pursuit?

The tent used as Audience Hall is now crowded with black official caps;
At the gates of the Outer Precinct shine white coats.

The Son of Heaven shall go hence and return to Ch'in Mountains;
His banners, his pennons, will re-enter Han Park.

Winding hill paths will lose their dangers,
Even to the horizontal clouds the pheasant feather fans will tower.

Soldier encampments on the Five Plateaux will be empty;
From the Right Streams, wind and waves of danger are dispersed.

[1] Line six is an allusion to the white-clad soldiers of a General of the Liang dynasty who were invariably victorious.

This day sees the purpose of Heaven;
You, oh rebels, are loosened from life and are become wandering souls.

How can you now offer to surrender?
You are false! we do not want vain offers of service.

Prince Kuang P'ing, Commander in Chief, is of the Dragon's seed;
Kuo Tzŭ-i, Supreme Commissioner, controls the Leopard Strategy.

Li Ssŭ-yeh, General of the Vanguard, carries the staff of Su Wu;
P'u-ku Huai-ên, General of the Left, wears at his girdle the knife of Lu Ch'ien-hung.

Spirit of the soldiers is swift as a bird's flight;
Bruit of their vigour annihilates the mighty whale.

Long spears, short spears, polished to snow colour;
Arrows fly from bows, transfix objects fine as Autumn down.

* * *

Heaven revolves, calamity is near its term;
The era of harmony will recur in its rotation.

Who says the sting of poison yet remains?
The evil odour is already washed away.

He whose eyes pierce obscurity, whose sagacity is divine, nears the vermilion threshold;
With supernatural speed feathered signals command a strong defence.

The Hua Mên, our allies, mount horses in the distant desert,
And cross Lin T'ao to hold the rebel hordes.

To requite Imperial Grace these people come,
But the rebels are weak, defeated: why such effort?

Men who form the spear point of attack dye their clothes in blood;
Mounted, they dash forward; their two-edged swords cut through a hair wafted on the wind.

I rejoice I know the Capital City will soon change hands;
I grieve that still among the rebels, women, children, mingle cries of grief.

Every household, every household, sells curved hairpins, round armlets,
To provide offerings of thick Spring wine, as they invoke the Son of Heaven.

During the Tenth Moon Ch'ang An is actually retaken. Tu Fu records this fact in a set of three poems called 'Re-taking the Capital,' which, were I to quote them, would entail lengthy explanatory digressions into Chinese ancient history and early literature, nor do I feel justified in undertaking these digressions at this juncture. By means of allusions used with consummate skill, Tu Fu reviews the past, analyses the present and expresses his hopes for the future. This done, he prepares for return to his duties and hurries back to the Capital as quickly as may be across the diagonal ravines of the loess country between Fu Chou and Ch'ang An. Presumably, as

nothing is said one way or the other, the household accompanied him upon this journey to the Capital.

V. IN THE CAPITAL, CH'IEN YÜAN, FIRST YEAR. A.D. 758

According to the *Chiu T'ang Shu*, Su Tsung re-entered Ch'ang An, Chih Tê second revolution, Tenth Moon, twenty-third day: that is, in the late autumn A.D. 757. The people of the one hundred surnames wept, rejoiced, wept, rejoiced, saying: 'We dared not hope to see the Above One once again.' Su Tsung also wept; he was indeed bowed with grief at the condition of the city. For three consecutive days, dressed in the white robes of lamentation, he visited the site of the Ancestral Temple which Lu-shan had burned, and mourned from his heart. At this same moment Ming Huang, in far Szechwan, started for Ch'ang An, which he reached during the opening days of the Twelfth Moon.

As Tu Fu makes no mention of the impressive events which I have described in the Year Record, I cannot believe that he was an eye-witness of Su Tsung's entry to the Capital. The Year Record, it is true, states that he was in the Imperial retinue upon this occasion, but as one of the commentators of the *Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan* points out, lines in one of the three poems on 'Re-taking the Capital' prove that the statement is erroneous. All he has to say in regard to these matters is contained in two lines from 'Years of Strength Travel' written a decade or more later:

> Among remaining ashes of Ancestral Shrine
> Son of Heaven wept;
> Grieving, mourning, in Wei Yang Palace, He
> yet held audience.

Furthermore, Tu Fu barely mentions Ming Huang's arrival, which took place early in the Twelfth Moon. I am inclined to think that Tu Fu arrived at Ch'ang An after that Moon had begun to wane; at all events he was in time to glimpse his friend the gentle, impractical, helpless Chêng Ch'ien for whom Ming Huang had created the rank of Kuang Wên and who, because he had served An Lu-shan, was sentenced to exile in T'ai Chou. Here, in the South-east, he served in some subordinate capacity for the short remainder of his life. Apparently Tu Fu waited in the street to see his friend pass and to bid him good-bye.

TAKING LEAVE OF CHÊNG EIGHTEEN; CH'IEN IS EXILED TO T'AI CHOU WITH THE LOW RANK OF SSŬ HU. I GRIEVE THAT ON THE THRESHOLD OF OLD AGE HE HAS BECOME IMPLICATED WITH THE REBELS AND FOR THIS REASON SUFFERS. WE MAY LOOK EACH OTHER IN THE FACE BUT FOR A MOMENT. MY AFFECTION IS EVIDENT FROM THIS POEM

Vol. IV, Leaf 8

Honourable Chêng, when the hair on your temples has turned to white silk, you are discarded as poor wood fit only to be burned:
When you painted, inspired by wine, you were proclaimed 'Old Painter, a Model for the World.'

You go ten thousand *li*; my heart is wounded that you suffer unrelenting reprimand at this time,
At the day of restoration, when near a hundred years of age you drop towards death.

Hurried, pressed, you already depart on the long road;
We meet by accident; there is no reason to delay parting gifts.

I must take forthwith from my Teacher what may be a last farewell;
Hoping in the end to be locked in friendship on the road by the stream of the Nine Celestial Spheres.

Tu Fu now takes up his official duties in the Left or Eastern Government Building, and embarks seriously upon his career as a Censor or Near Official. A series of poems follows, dealing with various Court ceremonials, which are most illuminating in regard to the mode of procedure.

La Jih falls within a few days of the solar term known as Great Cold, the last period of the year and frequently very cold indeed. In 1927, for instance, it fell on January 21st. The Emperor, to whom Tu Fu refers symbolically as the Principle of Grace, the Mere of Kindness and the Ninth Heaven, then sent the gifts described in the poem to the officials of his Court.

LA JIH, DRAGON DAY, DAY OF MEAT DRIED IN THE NORTH WIND

Vol. IV, Leaf 8

On La Jih, in ordinary years, warm weather is still far off;
This year on La Jih what was frozen has completely melted.

Snow colour is encroached upon, invaded; day-lilies, grasses, have come back;
Everything drips and trickles in Spring light; there are willow shoots.

I indulge in wine and wish to plan inspiration for this mild night,
So return home directly Audience in the Purple Apartment has dispersed.

Mouth grease, face medicine, are granted by the Principle of Grace, the Mere of Kindness;
Kingfisher-green jade tube, silver jar with one ear, descend from Ninth Heaven.

PRESENTED ON ACCOMPANYING CHIA CHIH, THE SHÊ JÊN, TO AN AUDIENCE AT DAWN IN THE TA MING KUNG, INTENSE BRILLIANCE PALACE

Vol. IV, Leaf 8

Dripping water-clock hurries dawn arrow at Fifth Watch;
In Ninth Celestial Sphere, Spring willows, peach flowers, are like fairies flushed with wine.

Warm sun; banners, pennants, coiling like snakes and dragons;
Wind light; high over Palace Halls flying swallows.

Audience ended, fragrance of incense smoke floats from your sleeve held close to mine;
Poems completed are pearls, jade, dropped from inspired pencil point.

We know the beauty of silken argument from Him Who Rules the World:
To-day, beside the pool, we see love-pheasant feathers.

AFTER AUDIENCE IN HSÜAN CHÊNG TIEN, DIFFUSE GOVERNMENT HALL, LEAVING EASTERN RESIDENCE

Vol. IV, Leaf 9

Sun rays pierce Heaven's Gate; yellow gold notice-boards shine;
Spring! stars appear; above Audience Halls sun's light is reflected, vermilion feathers on the banners glow.

Palace courtyard blossoms, masses, masses, catch tinkling girdle-pendants;
Incense-burner smoke, ringed, ringed, settles on hanging cobwebs.

Clouds of five colours have often floated over P'êng Lai Palace;
Snows which lingered have also vanished from Chih Ch'iao Hall.

We, Ministers in Attendance, return with measured gait to our green doors carved in circles;
We always come late from the Presence, sauntering slowly.

On the first and fifteenth of each month, when the moon was dark and when it was full, the Son of Heaven did not give audience in the Great South Hall but received his Ministers, as day broke, in the Violet Inner

Chamber which constituted a part of his personal residence. Ladies of the second step among the nine ranks of P'in, or Royal Concubines, were then in attendance. They were called Chao Jung, which, being translated, means 'bright or luminous in manner and appearance.'

The audience began at sunrise, and because much business was transacted, the long shadows of dawn gave way to the shorter shadows of approaching noon. As the time periods passed, they were proclaimed from the high pavilion near the outer edge of the palace enclosure, quite a distance away. The audience closed when the officials retired. Tu Fu refers to these officers figuratively, by the terms K'uei and Lung, the names of two famous Ministers under the semi-legendary ruler Shun.

VIOLET IMPERIAL APARTMENTS HALL; WITHDRAWING FROM DAWN AUDIENCE

Vol. IV, Leaf 9

Violet sleeves drooping like vines, two Chao Jung stand outside the inner door;
As they direct observance at Dawn Audience, the pair regard reverently Imperial dais.

Incense fragrance floats through large hall; Spring wind blows;
Blossoms fall; a thousand courtiers; pure shadows cast by high light move.

Time by the water-clock is proclaimed from the high pavilion: the sound far off, thin;
On Heaven's face there is happiness: we Near Officials comprehend.

Each time I leave the heart of the Palace, I
return to East residence;
I meet, accompany, K'uei, Lung, assembled at
Silver Love-pheasant Pool.

As the first care of the Emperor had been to visit the site of the Ancestral Temple, so the most urgent matter to be accomplished was to replace the ruined building. Workmen laboured incessantly and it rose apace. On the fifth day of the Second Moon the *nien hao* was changed to Ch'ien Yüan, Heavenly Origin, the term 'revolution' was abandoned and that of 'year' reintroduced. Before the spring had gone by, the ceremony of re-installing the Ancestral Tablets in the new building was held; Tu Fu took part and describes the scene from memory in 'The Days of Long Ago,' written many years later.

* * *

Since then carts, chariots, have returned,
Pillars, rafters, speedily rise high.

Ancients, old men, weep again for joy;
Guardians at Ancestral Temple make new instru-
ments from *wu t'ung* trees.

The building, although not equal to the first,
echoes its magnificence:
Already we realize the great recuperative power
of our Lord.

Rites of the Spring gone by were at an altar in
the open space;
Now Enlightened One Himself bends His body
at well-ordered sacrifice.

* * *

My insignificant person, although unworthy, becomes a Near Official,
Bears the Ruler company in the great following of high officers.

Ascending steps, hold reverently in both hands jade tablets;
Wearing high hat of ceremony, I listen for signals from the golden bell.

I serve the shrine, feeling ashamed that I, a Minor Officer, should thus receive the First Dew of Imperial favour,
And dwell in enclosure of palace side apartments, near the Cho Lung Hall.

Son of Heaven surpasses all filial grandsons;
Five-coloured Clouds of Joy rise from the Nine Celestial Spheres.

* * *

The wooden stands and sacred vessels exhale putrid smell of sheep's fat;
Bows and horns hang from the silk eaves' net.

In the same poem he speaks of the cleansing of the ladies' apartments in the Palace where much suffering had been experienced.

Powder, black eye-stones of the murdered palace ladies, their mirrors, their boxes of hair ornaments are removed;
The kingfisher enamel still shines, fresh as spring onions, bright as rising moon.

That Tu Fu took his duties very seriously and that he probably made himself an unmitigated nuisance by continual admonition, seems clear; and that his reproofs bore but little fruit is also clear. His heart is often 'wounded'; in fact, these months while he held office seems to have been sad, and brimful of disappointment.

Court Ceremonial was elaborate, and prescribed in every detail. The Son of Heaven lived in the North quarter of the Palace Enclosure and always sat facing South. Civil officers performed their duties in the departmental building placed to the Emperor's left, or on the East side of the vast quadrangle which constituted the Imperial City. Military men occupied the less honourable position to the West.

No one outside the immediate entourage of the Ruler – that is, the Palace Ladies and the Eunuchs – slept within the Forbidden City; but a Censor was always on duty in one of the bureaux in order to be instantly available in case his advice was required.

SPRING: PASSING NIGHT LEFT GOVERNMENT BUREAU

Vol. IV, Leaf 10

Flowers are indistinct by palace side-apartments wall, sun sinks through grass at earth's rim;
Birds flying past to roost twitter *chiu, chiu.*

Stars shining down on the ten thousand inner doors move,
Moon at edge of Ninth Heaven is round.

Not sleeping, fancy hear gold keys in locks;
Because wind, think of jade bridle-ornaments.

Bright dawn audience; have sealed memorial to throne;
Many times enquire night how passing?

EVENING: LEAVING THE LEFT ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

Vol. IV, Leaf 10

Near by, the passing of daylight hours is proclaimed, transmitted to the Court;
It is Spring; crowded together, banners and ceremonial weapons are level as a field of ripe grain.

I retire from audience; flowers hanging from the eaves scatter their petals;
I return to the administrative building; willows by its side unfold their leaves.

Snow on the Gate Tower has melted; walls are damp;
Clouds envelop the Palace, float low about the Halls.

I avoid people; I burn the rough draft of my reproof handed up to the Son of Heaven,
And mount my horse as the chickens go to roost.

TAKING LEAVE OF CHIA THE OFFICIAL ON HIS DEPARTURE FOR JU CHOU

Vol. IV, Leaf 10

wu t'ung trees before the West Government Building
Shade the whole enclosure which to me is empty.

Harassed, anxious, you return to your old home;
You go; I remain, wounded, in the heart of Spring.

Green gate of Palace Hall divides us,
Clouds are heavy on Tzŭ Lo Hill.

Men throughout life hold dear the Five Horse Chariot;
Pray do not suffer the streaked hair of old age to come unawares.

Tu Fu is discouraged at his impotence, at the impossibility of helping Su Tsung who, in spite of his good qualities, his filial devotion and his fine feelings, is undecided, easily led astray and completely under the domination of the Lady Chang, who during the Fourth Moon became Empress under the title Huang Hou. This discouragement he states frankly in a series of poems written beside the Crooked River, one of the Master's favourite haunts.

AT THE CROOKED RIVER, DRINKING WINE IN COMPANY WITH THE VENERABLE CHÊNG EIGHT, THE NAN SHIH

Vol. IV, Leaf 11

At the River Head little birds peck yellow willow flowers;
Long-legged marsh fowl, purple wild duck cover the dry bright sand.

We well know, white hair is no affair of Spring,
Still we will empty the fragrant wine-jar, and dote on all things in their bourgeoning.

At the present time I serve near the Emperor; freedom of action is impossible:
How shall my person succeed in providing for the household?

The talents of my venerable friend are still keen, his strength vigorous:
Could he learn to plant melon seeds beyond the Green East Gate?

CH'Ü CHIANG: THE CROOKED RIVER

Vol. IV, Leaf 11

On every side petals fly; thus Spring colour lessens, lessens;
Ten thousand atoms whirl on the wind; verily men grieve.

Meanwhile I see before my eyes these blossoms on the point of fading,
But because my sorrows are many, do not feel repugnance that wine should pass my lips.

Beside the river a small Sacrificial Hall, where kingfishers have built their nest, a red-throated cock and a green-winged hen;
At the edge of the Park an Imperial grave mound; there *ch'i lin* lie: a male, a female, carved in stone.

Carried to an infinite degree, argument by analogy proves that all creatures follow a principle of abstract right; they must be happy;
Why let pursuit of fleeting reputation exhaust one's being?

CH'Ü CHIANG: NUMBER TWO

Vol. IV, Leaf 11

Daily, daily, as I retire from dawn audience, I pawn my Spring clothes,
And return from the river head drunk, each and every day.

As a rule wine debts stand wherever I go;
But from ancient days until the present time, men whose lives reach seven tens are very few.

I see, boring deep, deep, through the flowers, sulphur butterflies,
And dotting the surface of the water, slowly, slowly winging their way, are dragon flies.

I invoke Spring wind, gleaming light; may they both revolve the world over!
We enjoy each other but an instant of time: let us not play at cross purposes.

AT THE CROOKED RIVER: WINE IN FRONT OF ME

Vol. IV, Leaf 11

I do not return but sit at River Head far beyond the Park;
Water still; Palaces, Halls, become indistinct, fade away.

Peach flowers fall, one after one; willow flowers drop;
Yellow birds at times flock together; white birds fly.

I give way to drink; I have long ceased to care that all men ignore me;
Lax in my attendance at Court, verily I differ from men of the world!

I, who hold an office, now realise that Ts'ang Chou, Home of the Immortals, is in the far distant sea;
Age great; wounded feelings futile; I may not cast away my official robe.

AT THE CROOKED RIVER: RAIN FALLS

Vol. IV, Leaf 12

Above Palace Enclosure Spring clouds press upon wall of the Park;
River belvedere; evening colour; sweet-scented season of the year; silence.

Forest flowers wet with rain add to their rouge, rose red;
Golden lotus, lengthened by the wind, stretch kingfisher girdles.

When the Dragon Braves were a new army,
Imperial Palace Chair came to rest deep within Palace;
Now in Halls of Fu Jung Pleasure-grounds, the burning of incense is neglected.

On what day will a Gold Coin Meeting be commanded?
For a moment, my vision sharpened by wine, I see lovely ladies, their lyres in brocade covers by my side.

A certain number of old friends are to be found at the Capital. Tu Fu writes a poem to Ts'ên Ts'an whom he had recommended for office, and receives a poem in

reply; as neither composition is of special interest I omit them both. Chêng the Imperial son-in-law is also at the Capital, and Tu Fu makes an excursion with him to the mountains at the South. We there find a brother Censor, Hsü Eight, returning to his home near Chiang Ning, the present Nanking, where Tu Fu had travelled in his early youth, and where he had seen a stone tablet upon which the replica of a picture by the great Ku K'ai-chih had been cut. The subject of the painting – legend says that it shone with miraculous light for a month after it was executed – was that of the Buddhist saint Wei Mo. Hsü has a rubbing of the picture, and Tu Fu speaks of it as he goes to wish Hsü a pleasant journey, but I do not quote the poem. He also requests Hsü to carry a letter to a priestly friend whom he had not seen since those early days of thirty years ago.

HSÜ EIGHT IS GOING TO CHIANG NING, THEREFORE I FORWARD A LETTER TO BE PRESENTED TO THE BUDDHIST PRIEST MIN THE COMPASSIONATE

Vol. IV, Leaf 13

I have not seen the venerable Min for three tens of years;
As I enclose this writing to be forwarded, tears flow like rushing water.

To-day can you or can you not engage in the pursuits you loved long ago?
You drop to old age; who is there to recite your new poems?

Who moves the board on which you play hedged-in-checkers beside a torrent in the hills?
I think of your coarse cassock as we floated on the lake in a little boat.

I hear that my Lord has discussed my future now that I am an official;
My hair is white; my head fuddled; confused; I only drink and sleep.

Tu Fu finds priests, both Taoist and Buddhist, by virtue of their office most congenial companions, and when they are talented as well he revels in their company. The silver pine tree described in the following poem is of the same genus as those magnificent specimens with gleaming trunks seen in North China to-day. The Recluse Grey-heads referred to at the end of the poem are four old gentlemen who, *circa* 212 B.C., in despair at the troubles of their day, retired to the hills whence they could not be enticed until disorder had given way to peace under the Han dynasty.

SONG ON THE THEME OF A PINE-TREE SCREEN BROUGHT BY THE TAOIST PRIEST, THE HONOURABLE SCHOLAR LI

Vol. IV, Leaf 13

At clear dawn I, the venerable old man, comb my white head;
The Taoist priest from Hsüan Tu Monastery comes to seek me out.

Gathering up my hair, I call my son to ask him in; he enters the door of my room,

Carrying rolled up in his hand a newly painted silver pine-tree screen.

The fir forest on the screen is peaceful, dark, mysterious;
As I lean on the balustrade, it suddenly seems as if this were not the mere work of a painter, a dabbler in vermilion and green.

The dark precipice appears actually to uphold the frosted snowy stem;
The tree with its flat spreading top is inclined, it bends back, it takes the shape of a moving, writhing dragon.

I, the venerable old man, my life long have loved strange old things;
Seeing this picture wherein intelligence and inspiration are both manifest, I am greatly elated.

I already knew the Immortal Guest, I thought we were intimate;
I now recognise the Great Artist; in his heart none else but the travail of achievement.

* * *

Under the pines I see old men, their caps and sandals alike;
They sit together, they must be the Recluse Greyheads of Mount Shang.

Disappointed in my hopes, I will sing as they did the Purple Fungus Song;
The times are dangerous, grievous, mournful; a sad wind soughs through the pines.

News comes from a younger brother in Honan, and in recording the fact, Tu Fu alludes to a charming legend of the 'purple thorn,' a variety of judas tree, the *cercis siliquastrum.* Three brothers, upon the death of their father, decided to divide their patrimony and go each his own way. A purple thorn in the courtyard, then covered with bloom, should, they agreed, be felled and distributed among them. The hour being late, the actual felling of the tree was postponed until the morrow. At bright dawn they assembled with axes and knives, ready for the work. To their amazement every blossom had withered: the tree was to all appearance – dead. What could be the reason? Reflection and discussion brought enlightenment: even members of the plant tribe cannot endure separation, how much the less men! The brothers reconsidered their decision; the tree came instantly to life, and the three men dwelt happily together for the remainder of their days. The poem itself I will not quote.

Tu Fu also writes on the theme of a poem by Chêng Ch'ien, now in exile, an exile which Tu Fu considers unmerited. He considers that the old man's guilt should be 'washed white as snow.' He presents, too, rather a stilted little composition to Wang Wei who has been kept at the Capital, and refers to the self-inflicted illness by which Wang Wei preserved his honour in the words:

An illness on account of the Bright Lord.

Two poems follow to a certain Pi Yao, a poet who has studied the art of wine-drinking and of whom we hear no more. As they throw light on Tu Fu's poverty-stricken condition, which he describes in a whimsical and highly colloquial manner, I quote them both.

CONSTRAINED – A HSING, PRESENTED TO PI YAO

Vol. IV, Leaf 14

Constrained! how am I constrained?
I live at the South end of the lane, my Lord at the North end of the lane.

I could feel resentment that we are neighbours in the same hamlet
And yet for ten days not once have I seen the colour of your face!

Since the time I sent back the government horse to the post-house,
The road has been difficult to walk on; it is rough as if strewn with brambles.

I am poor, I am without a mount; I am not without feet;
Formerly I could cross to you, now I cannot accomplish it.

Verily it is not because I pamper my insignificant person;
Nor is it that my feet are without strength.

My going on foot would cause higher officials anger at my loss of dignity;
Their minds are bound in conventions; my Lord should recognise this.

* * *

When dawn came, rain teemed, Spring gale was at its height;

In my beautiful sleep I did not hear bells and drums proclaim the hour of Audience.

My neighbour to the East promised to lend me his lame mule;
The mud is slippery, I dare not ride to the Court of Heaven;
I have already commanded my servant to hurry and pray that my name be placed on the list of those excused.

I am a man whose whole life calls forth the greatest pity:
How can I pass the entire day, my thoughts troubled, importunate?
I think of my Lord humming divine poems and am filled with respectful admiration.

Magnolia blooms are the first to flower, they are already fallen;
Moreover neither my Lord nor I are in our years of strength.

In the market-place at the head of the street wine is often bitterly high in price,
Therefore out in the world the disciples of wine and those who drowse after illumination are rare.

It is essential that you come quickly to drink a measure:
I have exactly three hundred shining copper cash.

PRESENTED TO PI FOUR, NAMED YAO

Vol. IV, Leaf 15

Our talents are great: we are the present Leaders of Poetry;
It is mortifying our households are poverty-stricken, our official rank contemptible!

We starve and freeze, servants treat us with scant courtesy;
Our faces in the prime of life have become those of venerable old men.

We are in similar case, we sigh, who pities?
We discuss literature, we smile, we appreciate ourselves.

Our works will be handed down with those of the scholars Chiang and Pao;
We look at each other – we *have* avoided being without sons!

Summer comes; heat increases; and Su Tsung presents his officials with cool grass cloth robes made by Palace women and inscribed with the recipient's name by his own Imperial Hand.

GARMENTS RECEIVED AS GIFTS FROM THE EMPEROR ON TUAN WU, FIFTH DAY OF THE FIFTH MOON, DAY OF THE SOUTH PRINCIPLE

Vol. IV, Leaf 16

Raiment made by Palace women! and it bears my name!
On Tuan Wu Day, grace, honour, are conferred on me;

Fine fabric of bean fibre which will retain the gentle breeze;
Light fragrant openwork silk gauze lies folded, white as snow.

It came from Heaven! the written characters are still damp.
When at the season of Great Heat I put on these clothes, a coolness will envelop me.

Their length, their size, exactly fit; when wearing them I will remember
That to the end of its course my body will bear evidence of the Enlightened One's affection.

It is the last poem Tu Fu writes while connected with the Court. The stream of contrary circumstance is too swift for him to stem, nor will his uncompromising integrity allow him to float happily in the pools guarded by the rocks of privilege. The post of a Censor who admonishes the empty air is in no way to his taste. With Tu Fu it is all or nothing; he must fulfil the duties of a Censor, must administer reproof to a Son of Heaven who will accept and act upon such reproof – or go. The former alternative not being within his choice, Tu Fu writes a farewell poem [1] in the guise of a 'Toast for Mêng Yün-ch'ing' – and goes.

[1] See *Fir-Flower Tablets.*

PART XVI

Tu Fu the Minor Official

CH'IEN YÜAN, FIRST YEAR, SIXTH MOON, TO CH'IEN YÜAN, SECOND YEAR, SEVENTH MOON. A.D. 758–759

I. AT HUA CHOU; SUMMER AND AUTUMN

IN CHIH TÊ SECOND YEAR I, FU, WENT OUT FROM THIS THE CHIN KUANG GATE AND BY LONELY BYWAYS REACHED FÊNG HSIANG. NOW, EARLY IN CH'IEN YÜAN, DISMISSED FROM POST AS CENSOR OF THE LEFT, I AM MOVED TO A MINOR POSITION IN HUA CHOU. GOING OUT FROM THIS GATE, HAVING PARTED FROM NEAR, DEAR FRIENDS, I GRIEVE OVER PAST AFFAIRS

Vol. V, Leaf I

Formerly this road led me to the way of service;
To the West the Hu Barbarians continually inflamed the outlying districts.

Even to-day the thought shatters my gall;
It must be that my spirit is not yet called back.

Having served near the Ruler, I now proceed to a city not far from the Capital;
Can it be the Most Venerable who has changed my rank?

I have no talents, am old and failing daily!
Halting my horse, I gaze towards the one thousand portals.

A commentary to this poem states:

The Master past year made statement to Emperor begging for Fang Kuan. Kuan, although watching the times, was still at Court. During Ch'ien Yüan first year Sixth Moon, Kuan was cashiered to Fên Chou in subordinate official post. The Master then, because he was implicated with Kuan, himself went out and did not come to the Capital again.

Truly a sad situation! Tu Fu made his way to Hua Chou, which lies some sixty miles East of the Capital in the shadow of Hua Shan, the Flowery Mountain, Sacred Peak of the West, and to this mountain he indites a poem.

GAZING AT THE PEAK

Vol. V, Leaf 1

The Western Peak! foot-hills; ridges, rising one above the other; high places which inspire shuddering awe;
All other peaks stand dropped as though they were its sons, grandsons.

How obtain from the Immortals a staff with nine notches,
Which will support me to Wash Hair Basin on Jade Woman Summit?

If I enter Chariot Box Cave, there is no road of return;
Chien Kua Mountains pierce the sky; there is but one gateway.

I will wait a little, and after chilly Autumn winds blow cold,
Will seek White Spirit in the heights, and ask what is the source of truth.

Magnificent as the mountains which girdle the edge of the Shênsi plain are, they form an effectual barrier to the cool breezes of the South-west Monsoon, which must have brought relief to the inhabitants of the Central State twelve hundred centuries ago, even as they do to-day. Hua Chou, lying behind this screen, was therefore extremely hot; furthermore, the position of a minor official at the command of his superiors, was extremely irksome, and Tu Fu makes no pretence of being pleased with his lot. He gazes from his window, wishing that he might pass over the precarious bridge thrown by a green pine across the ravine, and thus leave official life for ever, nor does he conceal his feelings in the whimsicality called:

EARLY AUTUMN, OVERPOWERING HEAT; WRITING-TABLE PILED HIGH — AS USUAL

Vol. V, Leaf 2

Seventh Moon, sixth day, overpowering the blazing heat, the steaming vapour;
The food before me I taste — not possible to return to it.

Every annoyance! from the depths of night innumerable scorpions;
Then, too, in late Autumn, many flies circle.

The restraint of my girdle drives me mad, I could give a great howl;
Why should the under secretary be thus hustled! things come just as usual!

I gaze to the South at the green pine tree which
throws a bridge across the shallow ravine;
How shall I contrive to walk bare foot on
layers of ice?

A glance at the map will show my readers that the Great West Road runs through Hua Chou. I beg them to consider what this simple statement implies. For countless ages men and beasts have plodded back and forth upon this track, the track which leads from the shores of the Eastern sea, along the Yellow River, cutting the loess of Honan and Shansi; passing through T'ung Kuan, the Lofty Barrier Pass; skirting the Shênsi plain along the foothills of the Chung Nan Shan; rising on the successive levels of the Dragon Mound in Kansu; threading the Jade Pass; and finally winding across the deserts of Central Asia, linking Far East to Far West: a marvellous thoroughfare indeed!

And on this thoroughfare, at the time of which I am writing, Tu Fu watched countless hordes of armed men passing East, passing West, as they are passing on that self-same road to-day. I shall not detail the marchings and counter-marchings he describes, as I have attempted to epitomize the situation in the historical Year Record at the end of the book. Poems six and seven of volume five are joined under the title:

WATCHING SOLDIERS FROM HSI AN, WESTERN PEACE,
MARCHING BY TO WAIT IMPERIAL ORDERS
WITHIN THE PASSES

These soldiers are under the command of General Li Ssŭ-yeh, who, having pacified the Western frontiers, is coming to join forces with Kuo Tzŭ-i in his attempt to

wipe out the remainder of the rebel forces, which forces seem hydra-headed indeed!

Poem eight is called: 'On Detaining the Hua Mên.' It will be remembered that Tu Fu foretold to the trembling Descendant of Kings whom he met on the road during the autumn of Chih Tê, first revolution, just before he himself fell into the hands of the rebels, the coming, as allies, of these same Hua Mên, who gashed their faces as an earnest of sincerity. Now that the West at least is peaceful, Tu Fu thinks it a grave mistake to detain these

> Sons of Northern Regions, whose arrogance reaches to the skies,

who satiate themselves with flesh food, wrap themselves in furs and are overbearing to the last degree; who in high autumn, when their horses are sleek and fat, have been accustomed to dashing across the frontier and seizing the harvest of the sons of Han. He says:

> To preserve virtue, their coming is admitted,
> They who have always and without ceasing been restrained, held back.

When a highly educated person visits the home of a lowly uninstructed member of the people, he is said 'to make bright the hut buried in grass,' and the converse is also considered to be true. The Hu, who smell because they eat meat and wear skin garments, Tu Fu considers 'darken' the palace with their coming and going. In fact, he hardly looks upon them as human beings and contemptuously uses the term 'things' in speaking of them. He refers in this poem, which I am not quoting because it is so long and so full of allusions, to a touching event which took place in the Seventh Moon of the year: I

mean the departure of Su Tsung's little fourteen-year-old daughter, the Princess Ning Kuo, to become the bride of the Uighur Ko Han or Chief. This custom of cementing an alliance by giving a Princess in marriage has often been resorted to in China, and is of course a most painful proceeding for the chief actress in the drama, who must exchange the 'moon of Han' for desert wastes. Upon this occasion the Son of Heaven himself sped his daughter on her way to the desert regions, from the Tzŭ Mên Post-house just beyond Hsien Yang. The little Princess, on parting, said:

> 'Affairs of the country and its households are of first importance; if I meet death I shall do so without resentment.'

Su Tsung returned to his Palace speechless, the tears coursing down his face. The two lines in which Tu Fu tells of the parting read:

Noble Princess sings song of Yellow Snow-goose;
Eminent Ruler commands white sun.

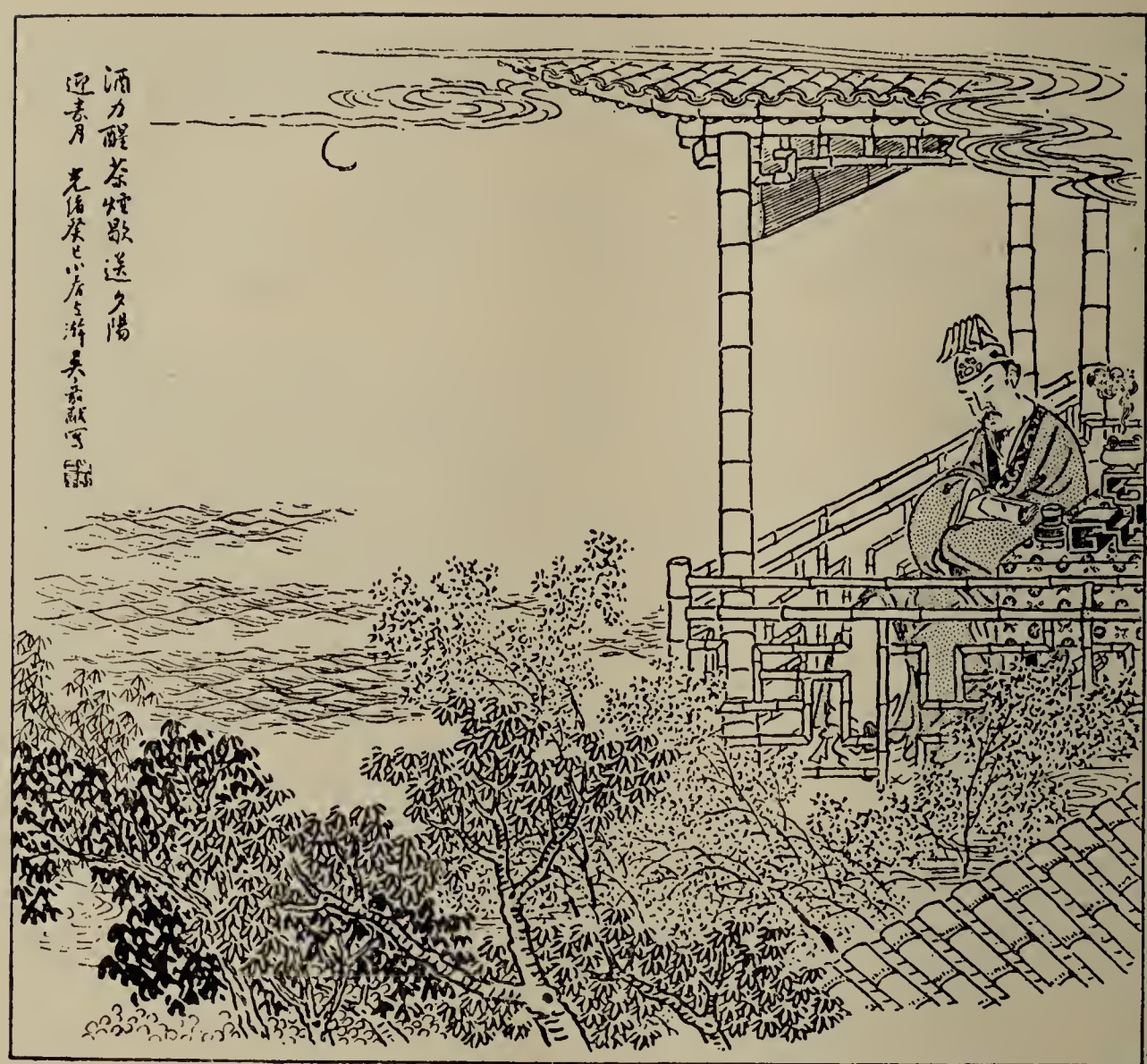
The song the little lady sang was composed during the Han dynasty by a Princess in the same case as herself, who longed that she might be transformed into a snow-goose and fly home; while the Emperor's 'command' refers to the story of one Yü Kung who was fighting a man named Hsia: the sun was on the point of setting and thus putting an end to an indecisive bout, when Yü Kung let fly an arrow full at the red orb, which obediently rose in the sky and allowed him to conclude matters satisfactorily. Ever since those far-off days the phrase has been used on taking leave of someone from whom parting is pain.

The whole affair of the Hua Mên and what their coming implied, caused Tu Fu bitter grief. It is therefore a relief to find that even in Hua Chou he has congenial companions who invite him to their entertainments, where for the time at least this grief is assuaged.

THE GRASS HUT OF THE TS'UI CLAN IN THE EASTERN MOUNTAINS

Vol. V, Leaf 3

I love the peace of your Grass Hut on Jade Mountain,
Stimulating air of high Autumn is both fresh and clear.



At times echoes of temple bells, bowl-gongs, ascend;
As sun sets, we still see fisher folk and gatherers of firewood.

On our plates peeled chestnuts from mouth of White Crow ravine;
Our meal, rice boiled with cress from below Green Mud Hamlet.

At the Western farmstead of Wang, Supervising Censor: why is there
Silence? pine trees! bamboos! the rough wood gate is closed and locked.

The 'farmstead of Wang' is the famous garden of the poet and statesman Wang Wei who, it will be remembered, was forced by An Lu-shan to serve in an official capacity and who is therefore now under a cloud. This, however, is followed by sad poems which show the depression Tu Fu feels. He himself is the sick horse he describes so poignantly.

THE EMACIATED HORSE – A HSING

Vol. V, Leaf 3

The emaciated horse in the Eastern suburb
causes me distress;
He is a bony skeleton, a waste of sand and rubble
surrounds him like a wall.

Attempt to lead him: he tries to move, but
weakly lurches to the side;
Can this be his intention, who was wont to
gallop and curvet?

Look carefully: a brand of the sixth grade
bears official seal;
People say the Three Armies in their passing
left him by the road.

His hide is dry, is caked with mud and filth,
peels off and falls in flakes to the ground;
He is left here like a withered branch in frost
and snow, his coat dull, lifeless.

Last year he advanced like a rolling wave to
expel remaining rebels,
It is not the habit of Hua Liu not to carry
Generals.

Men at arms all rode horses from Imperial stables;
Although dreary, depressed, perhaps this is an ailing spirit horse, capable of covering ten thousand *li*,

Which, on a time, passing a clod, made a mis-step – stumbled once;
You, who could not provide a perfect mount were rejected, cast away.

In misery and distress, on seeing people, you seem anxious to tell your woes;
Through a mistaken action you lost your master, your intelligence did not shine!

Now let loose to pasture, far away under cold skies, wild geese of Autumn keep you company;
At sunset none stable you, crows peck your sores.

What household will now take pity and give you nourishment,
That when the bright year comes you may again savour the long Spring grass?

WRITING POEMS

Vol. V, Leaf 4

I

By day, by night, I now endure anxiety:
We brothers are each in a different district.

Dead? alive? we do not know,
Or whether the roads between us stretch far.

To escape rebels we are divided, scattered;
Starving, freezing, we gaze perpetually towards each other.

Who would not return to his rustic gate?
Who desires to go out among dreaded tigers, wolves?

Looking up, I see wild geese among the clouds;
Beasts, birds, each has its place in line.

II

Thistledown springs up, nor does it lack a root;
It drifts hither, thither, following heaven's wind.

Under a cold sky it drops ten thousand *li* away,
And cannot return again to its own cluster.

I, the wanderer, think of my old home:
Empty for three years the crooked lane before my door.

I gaze far off, disappointed in my hopes, see only lights flaming on beacon stands;
Weapons, war chariots, fill to overflowing country East of the Pass.

How long before I reach the precipice of life?
To the lot of a traveller I am for ever bound.

I will bring this division to an end by quoting two poems written on the shortest day of the year – a most solemn occasion. The important audience then held took place in the chief hall of the Palace, and Officers in their most gorgeous red and green robes thronged the state apartments. From a great gold incense-burner in the

shape of a *ch'i lin* clouds of fragrant smoke arose, and the hall was lined with towering peacock-feather fans. Seventy-eight of these stretched on either hand, one hundred and fifty-six in all! While the Son of Heaven was taking his place upon the throne, two fans were crossed in front of him, shielding him from view; when his robes were arranged in perfect folds and all was ready, they separated slowly, revealing the sainted countenance of the One who Wore the Dragon Robes. The fans were then slowly carried back to their original positions.

Such was the scene which Tu Fu had beheld the year before when he attended the solemn ceremonial held in the Capital and appeared before the Son of Heaven; this year he, a negligible unit, must appear in the retinue of the Magistrate in an unimportant District.

THE SHORTEST DAY! INSPIRATION COMES. OFFERINGS SENT TO MY FRIENDS, THE CABINET ELDERS, IN THE HALLS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE NORTH RESIDENCE

Vol. V, Leaf 4

I

Last year at this dawning I raised two hands in reverence before Imperial Couch;
Fifth Watch, third stroke, we Officials, a file of Yüan birds, entered the Presence.

At this place of a wounded heart, I have just been hurried in the procession;
I recall exactly the incense smoke which coiled before my eyes, seeming the creative breath of Earth and Heaven.

There is no giving way to an absent-minded mood, I must talk and greet companions with a smile;
There are times when I put on my clothes upside down, inner garments where outer garments should be.

Man, whoever he may be, remembering his days of poverty and grief,
Realizes that day by day, sorrow follows the thread which measures the lengthening shadows of the sun.

II

I think over the past when I was among near officials who came leisurely to Court:
Last year on this day, I served before the Dragon Countenance.

The *ch'i lin* itself did not move; only smoke floated above the incense burner;
The peacock feather fans opened slowly, the shadows returning to their place in line.

Since the beginning, the Jade Arm-rest has stood at the North edge of Heaven,
And there have been vermilion robes serving in the centre of the Hall.

I am a lonely official; this day my bowels are torn, cut through.
My Autumn heart is near cold clouds; snow covers the hills.

II. A VISIT TO THE EAST CAPITAL; CH'IEN YÜAN, FIRST YEAR, TWELFTH MOON, TO CH'IEN YÜAN, SECOND YEAR, SPRING. A.D. 758–759

The military situation, especially the matter of divided command, causes Tu Fu the keenest anxiety, and recognizing in Kuo Tzŭ-i those qualities which finally made him the saviour of the dynasty, Tu Fu is convinced that permanent peace cannot be achieved until Tzŭ-i is in supreme command.

Mr. Nung nodded his head sagely and said: 'It was the same during the Great War; until the Allies unified their command they could not make real progress.'

Tu Fu is also convinced, rightly or wrongly, that the advice of scholars should be listened to and that their learning should be at the service of the State; furthermore, he has very definite ideas on what method should be pursued for overcoming the rebels.

In the Twelfth Moon of the year, having obtained leave of absence, he sets off for Lo Yang, the East Capital, then the headquarters of the Imperial forces under Kuo Tzŭ-i, bearing a carefully prepared plan of campaign which he feels sure would result in the annihilation of the rebels. I regret that the plan is too long and too complicated to quote; it bears evidence of deep study and shows that Tu Fu possessed a great familiarity with both the terrain and the personnel in question.

Whether the great General heeded Tu Fu's advice or profited by it, we do not know, as long before peace came to the banks of the Yellow River, Tu Fu had left the Central Plain for ever.

Six poems written on the road between Hua Chou and the East Capital are entered in the *Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan*;

I quote but three. The *fu ling* referred to in the first is a fungus which grows in fantastic shapes under large pine trees. It is gathered during the Second and Eighth Moons and carefully dried in the shade, to be used as a medicament. The dust storm described in the third is an experience common to all travellers and residents in North China, where during the winter months no rain falls, and where at times the entire surface of the earth bids fair to take the air.

MEETING YANG, THE YÜAN WAI OF HSIANG YANG, ON THE ROAD. WE ENTER THE CITY; I HAND UP THE POEM IN JEST

Vol. V, Leaf 4

I send to inform Yang, the Yüan Wai,
That the hills are cold, the *fu ling* of longevity rare.

When I return and it is rather milder, more genial,
I will dig the plant for you in the shade of dark green pines.

Turned over, brought out from the cave of a true Immortal,
I will present the best in the shape of birds or beasts.

I will also find an old thorn staff
To support you when first you waken after wine.

PRESENTED TO WEI EIGHT, A SCHOLAR OUT OF EMPLOYMENT

Vol. V, Leaf 4

We have not seen each other for a life time!
We have moved like Shên, Star of the West, and
Shang, Star of the East.

This night is what night?
We are here together in the light of candles,
lamps.

How long can the days of youth last?
Already the hair on our temples is grey.

I visit an old friend who has become half a ghost;
Startled, I gasp! my very bowels are scorched.

How could I know that in two tens of years
I should come up to my Lord's Guest Hall?

When we parted years ago, my Lord had not yet
taken a bride:
Behold! a complete row of sons and daughters.

Delighted to welcome politely their father's
friend,
They ask whence I have come;

And before my reply has reached an end,
Boys and girls ply me with thick wine,

Take scissors, cut Spring leeks in the night rain,
And serve yellow millet freshly steamed.

The host says, 'These meetings face to face are difficult;'
He drinks to me, raising ten times in quick succession the rhinoceros horn cup.

Ten wine cups! yet we are not drunk;
'My feelings, Sir, are those of an old friend, I shall remember you always.'

On the bright morrow mountain peaks divide us,
We shall both be immersed in endless, endless, world affairs.

WINTER'S END; GO TO EAST CAPITAL ON BUSINESS; EAST OF HU CH'ÊNG MEET MÊNG YÜN-CH'ING; RETURN AGAIN TO HOUSE OF LIU HAO; PASS NIGHT FEASTING, DRINKING. ON PARTING, I, STIMULATED BY WINE, WRITE A SONG

Vol. V, Leaf 5

Hurrying wind whirls dust, darkens Ho Hsien:
We travellers, making protective panels of our hands, do not see each other.

For a moment East of Hu Ch'êng City I open my eyes,
Halting my horse, I suddenly recognize the face of Yün-ch'ing.

Liu Hao is a host, a native of this place; otherwise we would not stop,
But would be indifferent to turning our whips and reins; we enjoy high festival.

Sir Liu rejoices that I come leading a guest
by the hand,
Prepares fermented spirits made from grain, sets
out lamps, presses upon us varied dainties.

Soon, on this very evening, our friendly inter-
course must end;
We avoid reference to tragedy, disaster, and
engage in a wine-drinking competition.

The light of shining dawn turns pale the glow
from a red pottery stove;
Wreathing the window, rays from the white
moon drop bright lines.

The Heavens open; Earth cracks in the streets
of Ch'ang An;
But the cold Winter is ending, spring comes to
birth in the Halls of Lo Yang.

Who knows when the recklessly driven chariots
will run together in the right tracks?
Alas! Alack! the arrow which indicates the watch
follows the water-clock as it divides the hours.

In men's lives these happy meetings cannot
occur frequently;
A cock crows in court-yard trees; our tears are
like tenuous wires.

While in the Prefecture of Honan, where the East Capital was situated, Tu Fu, according to his own statement, stayed at the hamlet of Liu Hun where his younger brother, of whom he finally has news, seems to have connections.

THINKING OF MY YOUNGER BROTHER

Vol. V, Leaf 6

I

Mourning! Disorder! hear my younger brother
Is cold, starving, near Chi Chou.

People but few; letters do not arrive;
Soldiers everywhere, we still endure their presence.

I remember the former mad hurry to escape;
Never a moment but I suffer the illness of our separation.

Now that I endure one thousand varied resentments,
I long to join the waters flowing to the East.

II

I should rejoice: Ho Nan is at peace!
Nor do I regard the siege of Yeh Ch'êng as important.

One hundred battles! who still lives?
Three years I have looked for your return.

In our old garden flowers bloom untended;
On Spring days even birds fly home.

For a long time past the hearth has not smoked;
From East to West the breath of news is rare.

Vol. V, Leaf 6

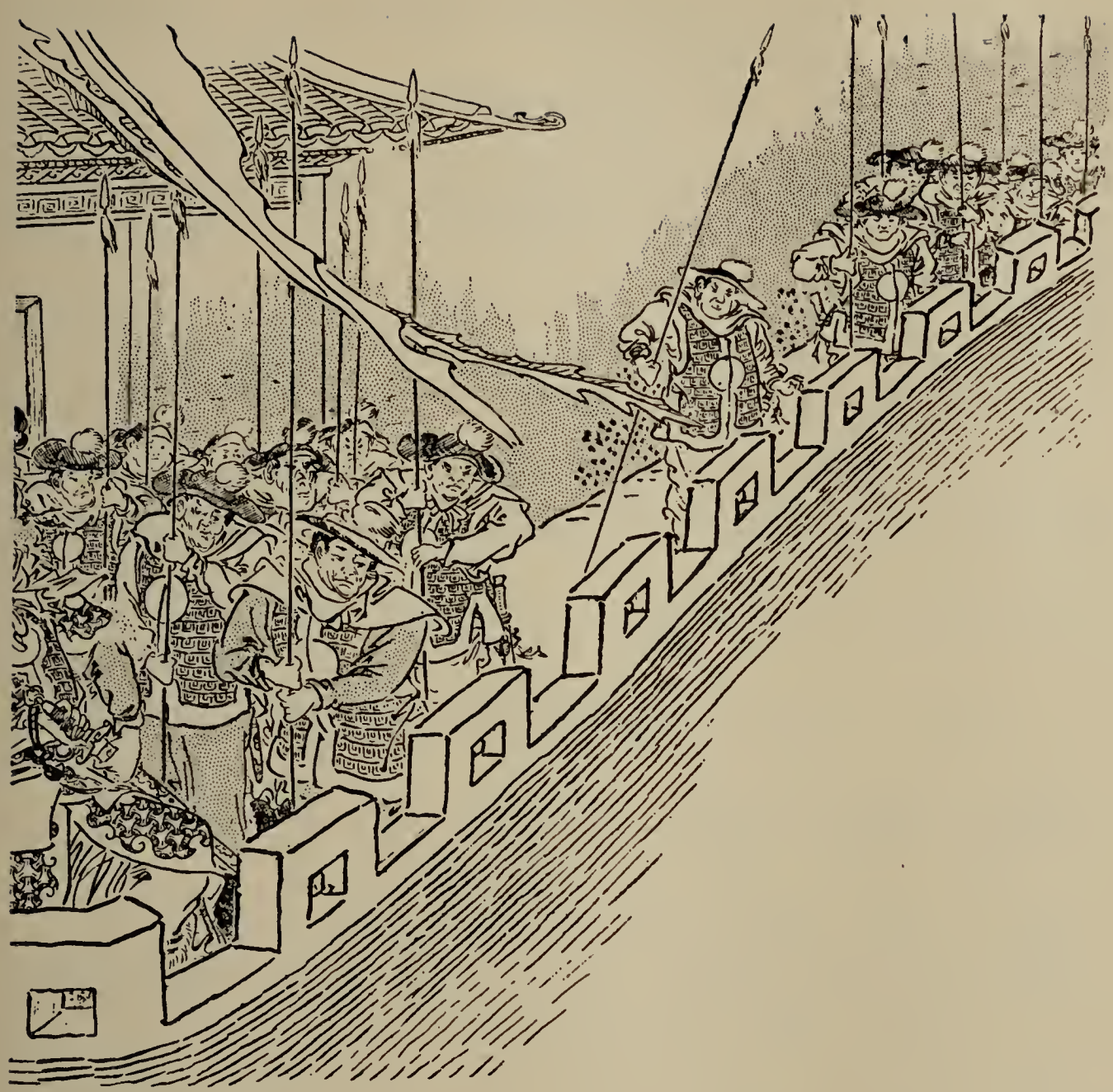
Who after this tangle of disorder succeeds in returning home?
A stranger country seems better than one's own land.

Because my heart felt bitter anxiety,
My thoughts dwelt on the probabilities of your life, or death?

Your writing alone is here, hanging in the letter bag on the wall;
Your wife has already relinquished her room in death.

The old dog feeling loneliness and grief,
Sits beside my bed; his head hangs.

Again Tu Fu 'Watches Soldiers,' and as the poem is not so very long I quote it here. In the matter of complications it is not entirely innocent. The soldiers, 'fierce leopards and tigers,' to whom he refers are further reinforcements from Li Ssŭ-yeh's command which are arriving from Pei T'ing, a district in far-off Sin Kiang; the 'malignant spirits' are the rebels An Ch'ing-hsü and Shih Ssŭ-ming; the Commander-in-Chief who has not yet received his 'carved spear' or staff of office is of course Kuo Tzŭ-i. In the last two lines Tu Fu, as the commentators point out, shows that he understands the art of war; he realizes that not Yeh Ch'êng and its environs, but Fan Yang, on the shores of the Liao Sea, is the 'rebel root,' he declares therefore that they should be attacked as one attacks wild animals, that, in fact, the 'nest and



hole' should be obliterated. Another long poem on washing the soldiers' horses follows; I do not quote it, but it has been exceedingly useful in forging the historical record.

WATCHING SOLDIERS

Vol. V, Leaf 7

From Pei T'ing brave soldiers depart,
Fierce leopards and tigers, there are many, yet still more.

Ardent, skilful in strategy, in the past they have not been defeated;
On frontier edge how is it now?

Malignant spirits throng on white horses;
Yet the Commander in Chief still waits for his carved spear.

Do not keep vigil below Yeh Ch'êng city,
But slay the whale by the waves of Liao Sea.

Tu Fu writes also of a young and promising cousin of whose death he hears, evidently for the first time.

NEVER TO RETURN

Vol. V, Leaf 7

Ho Chien is still guarded by soldiers;
Your bones lie in the deserted city.

All men have younger cousins,
But until my being comes to an end my resentful grief will not be soothed.

I admired your surpassing looks; you could count coins
When you wore the childish knots of hair; I loved your quick comprehension, your lively observation.

Over your face for three years, earth!
Grass comes up again; Spring wind blows.

Personal grief, anxiety for the State, distress over the fate of his exiled friends – Chêng Ch'ien, Li T'ai-po, Fang Kuan and Yen Wu, men to whom he is devoted – press upon Tu Fu, who feels utterly solitary.

STANDING ALONE

Vol. V, Leaf 7

In space hovers a bird of prey;
On the waters float two white gulls.

Wheeling, following the wind, it is easy to swoop
and strike
Birds who heedlessly drift back and forth.

Many dew drops wet the grass,
The spider's web has not yet caught its prey.

The workings of Nature are near to the affairs
of men;
I stand alone with my ten thousand griefs.

III. RETURNING TO HUA CHOU, CH'IEN YÜAN, SECOND YEAR, SPRING. A.D. 759

The late Spring finds Tu Fu on the Great West Road once more, returning to his post. The military situation on the banks of the Yellow River is desperate. Every male being from the age of fourteen up is impressed, every weapon of defence commandeered: the 'long weapons for hooking and thrusting' of which Tu Fu speaks, as well as the forked lances and the halberds with crescent blades, are bright with use.

A friend of mine, one of the few Occidentals who have witnessed the events on the Great West Road during the last few years, tells me that many, many of these weapons are still to be seen. Press-gangs too abound as they did so long ago when Tu Fu met conscript officers in village and hamlet as he passed. Tu Fu describes, in six remarkable poems, the tragic situation, the decimation of the popula-

tion, the cruel separations of every kind. The third, written at Stone Moat Village, appears in *Fir-Flower Tablets*. The others which, so my friend says, might describe the conditions of a few months ago, read:

I

THE CONSCRIPT OFFICER AT HSIN AN, THE VILLAGE OF NEW-FOUND PEACE

Vol. V, Leaf 9

The traveller following Hsin An Road
Hears cries, hubbub of many people talking, hears
the muster-roll of soldiers called.

He questions the Conscript Officer at Hsin An,
Village of New-found Peace;
(The officer replies:) 'District is small; besides
there are no more full-grown men;

The Prefect's Proclamation came down last night;
We must select from inferior material men mid-
way to manhood for the front.'

The men midway to manhood are absurdly short
and small:
How can they help to guard the King's City?

Fat boys have mothers to see them off;
Thin boys start solitary, alone.

White waters at sundown still flow to the East;
Green hills yet resound with groans.

(*I comfort them, saying:*)

'Do not give way nor let your eyes wither from much weeping;
Control the tears which stream, which drench your faces.'

I seem to see the bones behind the withered eyes;
In the long last neither Heaven nor Earth can pity.

* * *

Our soldiers have seized Hsiang Chou,
Daily, nightly, I long for Peace.

Who could have imagined or foreseen this outbreak from the rebels?
Camped on their homeward road, our soldiers were scattered like the stars.

They take refuge behind the old ramparts in order to obtain provisions,
And drill men near the ancient Capital.

They dig trenches but do not reach the water,
And graze horses where it can easily be done.

Moreover the Son of Heaven's soldiers are disciplined and well disposed;
Nurtured and well cared for; this is very clearly established.

Do not weep tears of blood when you say farewell as they go;
Like a father, an elder brother, is the great Driver of the War Chariot!

II

THE OFFICER AT T'UNG KUAN, THE LOFTY BARRIER PASS

(The battle of T'ao Lin or the Peach Flower Forest took place on the edge of the Yellow River, and there Ko-shu Han lost the flower of his men.)

Strong soldiers, why toil, toil,
Ramming down walls on T'ung Kuan road?

Great walls surpass iron in strength;
Lesser walls rise ten thousand times ten feet and more.

I ask the official at T'ung Kuan: 'Pray,
Are the repairs to the Barrier still needed to provide protection against the Hu Barbarians?'

He begged me to dismount and walk;
He pointed out to me an angle in the hills.

Lines of battle palisades joined the clouds
Which flying birds could not surmount.

(*He spoke:*)

'We only protect ourselves against the coming of the Hu:
Should sorrow, grief, descend again on the West Capital?

Honourable Sir, note the strategic point:
Contracted, hemmed in, it admits but a single vehicle.

When difficulties, dangers arise, we rush out long weapons for thrusting and hooking;
But for a thousand ages here we use one man.'

(*I said:*)

'Ai tsai! alas! in the battle of T'ao Lin
A hundred, a myriad men were changed and became fish.

Adjure, I pray you, the generals who guard the Pass,
To be wary, not to learn of Ko-shu Han.'

IV

Marriage in China has always been a complicated affair of supreme importance. A father cannot do his daughter a greater wrong than to neglect arrangements for this essential rite; nor can a daughter be more unfilial than to object to any arrangements made. An old and popular ditty runs:

Marry a cock, follow a cock;
Marry a dog, follow a dog.
Married to a cudgel or a pestle,
Be faithful to it and follow on.

A marriage arranged in childhood, to take place when a girl reaches the age of sixteen or seventeen, is called a 'knot the hair' marriage, because the head-dress of a virgin is then disused. A bride is not expected to leave her room until dawn of the third day after the wedding, when the bridegroom presents her to his parents, and she, raising her hands to her bowed head, pays them reverence, thus accepting their authority and being accepted by them as a member of the Clan. Her position, until

this ceremony is accomplished, although the marriage itself be consummated, is equivocal. Should she, for instance, die in this short interval, her body is returned to the Clan which gave her birth.

In the opening lines of the following poem the bride, instead of using the ordinary simile for a wife, namely that of the wistaria clinging to fine old trees, compares herself to the tendrils of the rabbit-silk or leafless dodder which, seeking support, can only reach the short-lived herbage. In Chinese thought a soldier, whose tenure of life is uncertain, could never be compared to a pine tree, which is an emblem of longevity.

THE NEWLY MARRIED CUT APART

(*The Woman Speaks:*)

The trailing rabbit-silk clings to wild chrysanthemums and hemp,
Therefore its outspread shoots do not reach high.

A maiden given in marriage to a fighting man,
Were better cast away beside the road.

I knotted hair and became my Lord's wife,
But sleeping-mat on my Lord's bed is not yet warmed.

Yesterday at yellow dusk you married wife; to-day at dawn say must depart;
Is this not too hurried, too precipitate?

Albeit my Lord does not go far,
He hastens at Ho Yang to guard the lines.

Unworthy One's position is not yet clearly defined:
How can I lift two hands in reverence before husband's mother, husband's father?

At the time my father, mother, nourished me,
Day and night they treasured me in peaceful seclusion.

Every girl must have a place to return home to;
She should even follow a cock or a dog.

My Lord now goes to death place;
Deep pain is driven to very centre of my bowels.

I long to go out, I swear it, to follow my Lord;
Shape and being are transformed; distraught, I tremble.

Do not because of your newly-married bride think anxious thoughts;
Put forth the last effort of your strength: your business weapons, warfare.

Were wife's person to be in midst of army corps,
Soldier's spirit would perhaps not rise in ardour.

Myself I sigh; woman of a stricken household!
I have always worn short coat and lower garments of openwork silk gauze.

The silk gauze coat I will not use again;
Before my Lord I wash off red rouge and black eye-paint.

Throwing back my head, I look towards Heaven and see a hundred birds flying;
Large, small, destined to wheel in pairs.

In confusion, running contrariwise are all affairs of men;
I yearn to be united for ever with my Lord.

V

FALLEN INTO OLD AGE SEPARATION

On all four sides, in open spaces beyond the city, no unity, no rest;
Men fallen into old age have not attained peace.

Their sons, grandsons, every one has died in battle:
Why should a lone body finish its course?

Throwing away his staff, he goes out from gate, departs;
Tramping with the forces towards bitter, acid grief.

Fortunately I have my molar teeth and grinders, my front teeth well preserved;
Can therefore condole with those in whose bones the marrow has dried.

Since the old man wears cuirass and helmet,
He takes leave of honourable District official bowing low, his hands joined on his breast.

His old wife lies on the road weeping, wailing;
Her upper garments, lower garments thin in the sunset of the year.

She only knows this is death-parting;
Moreover she shudders, her anguish is doubled
by the cold.

He who leaves here is destined not to return,
Yet I hear him urging her to add to food, saying:

'The walls of Tu Mên Pass are very strong;
The ferry at Hsing Yüan Ford is not hard to cross.

'It differs from that below Yeh Ch'êng City;
Granting death must come, time still stretches
wide before us.'

In man's life there is meeting, parting;
Can life increasing and triumphing, life decreasing
and decaying, be brought together to one
point?

I think of things past; my days of youth and
strength;
Slowly pacing back and forth, I sigh long sighs.

Everywhere in the ten thousand States taxes are
levied; frontiers are guarded;
Beacon fires spread over high ridges, mountain
ranges.

Corpses piled in heaps; grass, shrubs, stink;
Blood running freely, sources, streams, redden.

What country village is a place of joy,
Where I dare still relax, desist from effort?

Life in my thatched hut is cut short, relinquished;
I sink into despair, wounded my lungs and liver.

VI

WITHOUT HOME, CUT OFF

The period T'ien Pao has passed, I am solitary, desolate;
Rank weeds, tall canes, fill the garden by my empty house.

In my hamlet were a hundred households and more;
World disorder has sent each West or East.

The living have no breath of news exhaled, no breath of news inhaled;
The dead have become dust, or mud, oozing under water.

Because the battle turned to rout, I the ignoble
Have returned, have come to seek the old pathway to my home.

I walked for a long time seeing empty, crooked lanes among the ruins,
The sun pale; atmosphere oppressive, gloomy.

Wild cats and foxes were all I came across;
Startled, they raised their hair; I wept in impotent rage.

My neighbours, in front, behind, to right, to left, which, who, remain?
One, two, old friendless widows.

A bird settled for the night cannot be torn from
its own old branch;
Exhausted, I have obtained leave to rest here for
a short time.

It is Spring: I, one man, carry the hoe, the
mattock on my back;
At dawn, at dusk, I still water my fields.

The District Conscript Officer knows that I have
come;
I am under summons to appear, to enrol again
with the skin-drums, and the horse-carried
drums.

Although I go out to serve from my native
Prefecture,
I have no wife, no loved one of the inner household,
to care for and lead forth by the hand.

I depart from here one lone man;
I go far off; my fate uncertain, obscure.

Since my home village is ruined, a brazier
empty of all but ashes,
It is immaterial whether I lead my life far off or
near at hand.

My agony is a stream which flows for ever: my
mother lay in sickness and in pain,
Five years bowed under the burden, then in
poverty she died.

She gave me birth, but did not profit by my
strength;
Wife, mother, their mortal bodies reached the end
in bitterness and strife.

If a man's life be cut off, if he has neither kith nor kin,
Can he be one of the countless people who prepare the ground for rice?

IV. AT HUA CHOU, CH'IEN YÜAN, SECOND YEAR, SUMMER AND AUTUMN.

The summer of Ch'ien Yüan, second year, brought drought to add to the miseries of the patient, suffering 'black-haired people': drought and its faithful shadow – famine.

SIGHING ON A SUMMER DAY

Vol. V, Leaf 11

Summer sun rises East of North,
Ascends the sky, crosses the centre of the Celestial thoroughfare at noon.

Its red-hot light is transferred to the level plains,
Oppressive, steamy; how contrive to open the lungs?

High Heaven has long been without the Spirit of Thunder;
I hope he does not disobey Imperial Command!

Rain falls but moistens nothing;
From once well-watered fields rises yellow dust.

Winged birds, alas! die of heat;
Fish in the pool are dried in its mud.

The ten thousand people in consequence are
scattered and without fixed abode;
As far as eye can reach, only artemisia grows.

Things have reached a point! North of the Great
Stream
Has become a land of lean and tawny jackals as
well as tigers.

I think of Yu and Chi so far away;
The Ruler's soldiers, where can they be? Ah!

I sit before my food but cannot swallow;
My heart sinks, it is not attuned.

* * *

SIGHING ON A SUMMER NIGHT

Vol. V, Leaf 12

The eternal sun! it can not set!
Heat blazes, vapours rise; poison enters my vitals.

How to come by a breeze from ten thousand *li*,
To sway, lift, blow upon my garments?

Sky is luminous; glorious moon rises;
Forest is dense; bright rays lengthen.

Heart of summer; alas, the nights are short;
I open pavilion doors that light air may enter.

The emptiness is brilliant, I see minute trifles,
And winged insects fly everywhere.

All things, great or small, have feelings;
Their own comfort is assuredly their chief concern.

I think of them, the soldiers who bear spears,
Who, the livelong year, stand guard at frontier edge.

By what means can they bathe in fresh waters?
Gazing into distance, they seem to grasp the heat.

They strike the watch throughout the night upon long-handled pans;

The resounding clamour rings through ten thousand districts.

The glory of green and purple, although worn on the person,
Does not equal the joy of an early return to one's native village.

Sorrowful notes of flageolets rise from Northern City,
Grey cranes, white red-crested cranes, wheel, calling in the air.

Again my troubles press upon me, I am weary;
Flaming thoughts of happy times are roused.

Food became impossible to obtain; and yet children must be fed. Brave Bear and little Thoroughbred Horse, to say nothing of their sisters, were growing up and must be nourished. Starvation, it will be remembered, had already claimed one of the family. If the children were to be fed, it was evident that their father must renounce official life and take them to some part of the country where food was to be had. As there seemed no alternative road, Tu Fu decided to walk upon the way indicated. He therefore resigned from official life.

WRITTEN AFTER 'AUTUMN STANDS'

Vol. V, Leaf 12

Neither sun nor moon is merciful in its course;
The series of the seasons came to a division last night.

The broad locust of the heat does not cease to call;
Swallows of autumn already seem flitting guests.

My life long I have only desired to wander;
Sad, disappointed, my years are half one hundred.

Ended official career! the reason too lies in myself;
Why adhere to the form of service?

Titles of Poems by Tu Fu from the Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan

VOLUME I

The Gate Tower at Yen Chou City	Page 52
Gazing to the Lofty Mountain	53
Chang: A Personage who lives in Retirement	55
In Time of Rain, Writing my Thoughts	57
At a Banquet on Stone Gate Mountain	57–8
The Southern Moat at Jên Ch'êng	58
The Mongol Horse	58–9
The Painting of a Falcon	59
The Grass Study of Chi, the Buddhist Priest	60
The Old Farmstead of Tsung Chih-wên	61
My Maternal Uncle makes a Hillock	63–4
Night Feast at Estate of the Tso Clan	64
A Writing from my Younger Brother	66
Presented to Li Po	69
Accompanying Li Po-hai to Li Hsia Pavilion	70
Going Temporarily to Lin I	72
With Li Twelve, Seeking Fan Ten	75
A Feast in the Heart of Lotus-Flower Grotto	81–2
The Eight Immortals of the Wine Cup – A Song	83–5
This Night – a Hsing	86–7
Sent, Presented to Wei, my Elder, the Yin of Honan	90–1
Offered up, Presented to the Official Wei, my Senior	92–5
A Winter Day; Thinking of Li Po	99
War Chariots – a Hsing	100–2
The Pagoda at Tz'ŭ En, Temple of Compassionate Grace	104–5
After Illness, Going Across to see Wang	105–7
Handed Down to my Cousin's Grandson Chi	108–9
A New Year Vigil at Tu Wei's House	110–11

VOLUME II

Ch'ü Chiang. Three Stanzas	113–4
Friendship and Poverty – a Hsing	114–5
White Silk-thread – a Hsing	115–6
Going Out from the Frontier	119–22
Taking Leave of Kao Thirty-five, the Keeper of Records	125–7

Sent to Kao Thirty-five, the Recorder Page 127–8
Record Left Behind, Presented to Ts'ui and Yü 134–5
Dazzling Ladies – a Hsing 146–8
Fleet Horses in the Son of Heaven's Stud 156–7
A Stroll with Chêng to the Hill Forest of General Ho 160–4
Song Inspired by Wine 164–6
Repeated Visit to the Ho Clan 166–9
Moored in a Boat 169–70
Written in Jest to Chêng Ch'ien 170
The Mei Pei Hsing 171–2
A Summer Day 173–4
Bewailing Autumn Rain 174–6
Ninth Day: Sent to Ts'ên Ts'an 177–8

VOLUME III

My Official Rank is Determined 179–80
Second Going-Out from the Frontier 183–6
Compelled to Leave – a Hsing 187
Travelling from the Capital to Fêng Hsien 189–96
Seeking Ts'ui Ch'i and Li Fêng 196–8
Taking Leave of Ch'êng 199–200
The Study of the Venerable Ts'ui Nineteen 204–8
Flood Waters at San Ch'uan 214–7
Hurrying from this Place 218–9
Pity for a Descendant of Kings 220–2
A Lament at the River Head 224–6
The Tragedy of Ch'ên T'ao 227
The Tragedy of Ch'ing Fan 228
Snow Falls 228–9
Hsieh Hua's Drinking Song 229–30
At Night, Facing the Moon 231
Spring – Looking into the Distance 232–3
News of my Younger Brother 233
Thinking of my Little Boy 233–4
Poem Set Down in Captivity 234–5
Block Lu Tzŭ Pass 238–9
Ts'an Kung's Room in Ta Yün Temple 241–6
Visiting Su Tuan in the Rain 246–7
Joy at Going to the Travelling Palace 248–50
Telling my Innermost Thoughts 251–2
I Receive a Writing from my Home 253–4
Taking Leave of Li 257–8

VOLUME IV

Fleeing to P'êng Ya	Page 208–11
Moon	259–60
Travelling by Night	261
Alone, Pouring Wine	261–2
Travelling on Foot	262–3
On a Journey, Halting at Chao Ling	263–4
Ch'iang Tsun	265–7
Travelling to the North	268–79
Imperial Soldiers Behold District Held by Rebels	280–2
Taking Leave of Chêng Eighteen	284–5
La Jih	285–6
Accompanying Chia Chih to an Audience at Dawn	286–7
After Audience in Hsüan Chêng Tien	287
Violet Imperial Apartments Hall	288–9
Spring: Passing Night Left Government Bureau	292–3
Evening: Leaving Left Administrative Building	293
Taking Leave of Chia	294
At the Crooked River, Drinking Wine with Chêng Eight	295
Ch'ü Chiang	295–6
Ch'ü Chiang: Number Two	296
At the Crooked River: Wine in Front of me	297
At the Crooked River: Rain Falls	297–8
I forward a Letter to Min the Compassionate	299–300
The Pine-tree Screen	300–1
Constrained – a Hsing, Presented to Pi Yao	303–4
Presented to Pi Four, Named Yao	305
Garments Received from the Emperor	305–6

VOLUME V

I Grieve over Past Affairs	307
Gazing at the Peak	308
Early Autumn, Overpowering Heat	309–10
The Grass Hut of the Ts'ui Clan	313–4
The Emaciated Horse – a Hsing	315–6
Writing Poems	316–7
The Shortest Day: Inspiration Comes	318–9
Meeting Yang, The Yüan Wai	321
Presented to Wei Eight	322–3
Passing Night at House of Liu Hao	323–4
Thinking of my Younger Brother	325
News Comes from my Younger Brother	326

Watching Soldiers Page 327–8
Never to Return 328
Standing Alone 329
The Conscript Officer at Hsin An 330–3
The Newly Married Cut Apart 334–40
Sighing on a Summer Day 340–1
Sighing on a Summer Night 341–3
Written after 'Autumn Stands' 343–4

VOLUME XIII

K'un Ming 149

VOLUME XIV

Former Travels 76, 77, 203
The Days of Long Ago 211–13, 289–90
Years of Strength Travel 36, 41, 49, 78, 82, 136, 137, 213, 236, 255, 283

VOLUME XVII

Of Old, Long Ago 150
Gifted Painter 152–3
Fighting Cocks 153–4
Lo Yang 203

VOLUME XVIII

Mistress Kung-sun 33–5

Miscellaneous Poems and Extracts

We Despatch a Legate	*Author* Empress Wu	Page 28
Seeking Fan, the Retired Scholar	Li T'ai-po	73–4
Three Character Classic	Wang Ying-lin	74
Sent in Jest to Tu Fu	Li T'ai-po	76
Yü Yu Wên	Yüan Chieh	87
T'ang Lu Tien		89
Chiu T'ang Shu		143–4
T'ang Shu		226
T'ang Shu		237
T'ang Shu		257
On the Eaves of the World	Reginald Farrar	353–5
Travels of a Consular Official in North-west China	Eric Teichman	356–7

Topographical Note

It is difficult to realize the vast extent of what was the Chinese Empire, a major difficulty being presented by the fact that, except on Mercator's projection, no map of China on a scale commensurate with that of better known parts of the world exists. Take the ordinary atlas: Switzerland will appear in the scale 1–200,000, which is between fifteen and sixteen miles to the inch, while the map of China, which includes a large part of Central Asia, is shown at 1–32,000,000, or about fifty miles to the inch. Now very few people consider this all-important question of scale, and the popular conception of the Far East is, as a result, out of balance.

The events recorded in this volume of Tu Fu's autobiography occurred in a part of this vast empire which is but little known to western travellers; on an age-old stage where for centuries the most important Acts in the Drama of Chinese History have been performed; it is a stage, moreover, divided by natural barriers from the more accessible parts of the Central State.

The provinces of Kansu, Shênsi, Shansi occupy the north-western corner of the Eighteen Provinces as they are divided to-day, and provide the ladder to Central Asia, which is the roof of the world.

Kansu and Shênsi are traversed from North-west to South-east by spurs of the K'un Lun Mountains, and both provinces abut the elevated ridges of the Mongolian tableland to the North. As the mountains run from North-west to South-east, so the Yellow River, which the Chinese call the *ho* or 'stream,' runs from South-west to North-east diagonally across the province of Kansu, making headway with great difficulty, as its bed is strewn

with rocks. However, on it pushes at the foot of mountain chains which touch 20,000 feet in height; it makes an immense half-circle beyond the Ordos or 'sandy wastes,' which is the southern extension of Mongolian tableland; changing its course, rushes South towards the land of sunlight, dividing Shênsi from Shansi, absorbing on its way the Lo River, which Tu Fu saw in spate, and a myriad other streams rushing to its bosom from East and West. This southward course is, however, abruptly halted by the towering mass of Hua Shan, Peak of the West, and the Ch'in Ling range, as the continuation of the K'un Lun is called. Having traversed Shênsi from West to East, this range begins to sink to the plain of central Honan. The Yellow River, halted in its course, makes an acute turn, flowing due East towards the sea, at right angles to its former course. In the elbow caused by this sudden turn stands the most important strategic point in China: it is T'ung Kuan, the Lofty Barrier Pass, referred to so often in the pages of this book; the all but impregnable gateway dividing West from East and setting apart behind their mountain barrier the provinces of Shênsi and Kansu.

To my regret I have never visited the T'ung Kuan, I have never ascended the banks of the Yellow River to its edge; have never passed between vertical walls of loess towering five hundred feet into the air, forming a passage where 'one man can hold a thousand'; I have never traversed the high ground leading to T'ung Kuan itself and stood where I could witness the union of the clear Wei and the Yellow Rivers. I have indeed read carefully the all too scanty records of Occidental travellers, and have followed pace by pace the Rev. Père Licent, S.J., who spent ten years in exploring the Yellow River Basin and

has published an invaluable monograph upon the subject, describing its geological formation, making notes as to flora and fauna and mapping every inch of the route, but I have not seen T'ung Kuan! Such is the sad, the insuperable fact. How then can I describe this all-important centre of the eternal triangle formed by the provinces of Shênsi, Shansi and Honan, this corner of the Central Flowery State which for millenniums has been soaked in the blood of contesting hordes? Yet I feel that it is essential to my readers to be enabled to visualize the nature of the terrain at this point where the pulse of ancient China must still be felt. I therefore turn to that most fascinating book, *On the Eaves of the World*, by the late Reginald Farrar, a noted botanist, and quote a few passages from his remarkable description of the loess country which surrounds T'ung Kuan.

> 'This mysterious word (loess) is, I believe, the invention of Baron Richthofen, and as it will recur frequently, it is essential that I should now give you some notion of what it means and involves. It is well known to the "merest schoolboy" of Macaulayese tradition that the centre of Asia is one sandy lifeless wilderness of incomparable size and age. Now, from the very beginning of such a state of affairs it has been the habit of the great deserts . . . to become restless and excitable in the opening months of the year; they rise up and take the air, accordingly, in dust-storms . . . filling all the world with a cimmerian darkness of midnight at noon-day, compared with which the densest of London fogs is but a gentle haze. . . . This driven silt is said to be the ultimate secret of the loess. For many millions of years beyond all mortal reckoning the deserts have blown and floated and drifted across the face of Eastern Asia, not only in their periodical storms . . . but all through the year, when the winds ruffle their loose faces. And this silt of theirs, in the passing of aeons, has settled down over all the face of Northern China in an accumulated layer of compressed dust now many hundreds or even thousands of feet in depth. . . . The loess now forms the lower ranges of the hills and all the plains and cultivable levels. In effect, it is of a dusty ochre colour, a hard thick substance

like dried mud; its colouring spreads desolation over the land and its lines are dull and monotonous. Not always, though, for it has strange laws of cleavage, and loves to gape into deep straight-sided gaps and gullies, traps for the unwary and a sore nuisance to the traveller, but which, nevertheless, have a picturesqueness of their own, of straight castellated wall rising over castellated wall till the flat planes of those faces are like some painted stage-setting. . . .

'. . . Every inch of it, indeed, is tilled to its uttermost possibility; it may be called the staff of life to the Northern Chinese, and even were hill-trees and shrubs willing to clothe the slopes of its downs, the peasants would not suffer them to do so, in their anxiety to get the fullest possibilities of livelihood from every portion of their ground. With the result that the bared hills, terraced up for millet and grain, offer naked flanks to the summer rains, and are gashed and torn on every side in cruel ravines like wounds, tumultuous and ghastly, by which the torrents spout themselves furiously away without doing any good to anybody. To the traveller the loess is an unmitigated nuisance. . . . In the summer the loess blows across your path in a cloud of suffocating dust that infiltrates every portion of your clothing and person; but in rain its tracks become deep pools and sloughs of unnegotiable liquid mud, in which mules and men get bogged for hours. . . .

'Far away to the right are the uniform hills of Shansi, towering along the horizon in a line of soft blue, while along their feet comes the yellow serpent of the Yellow River, advancing to the point where it incorporates the Wei Ho, and breaks away to our right on its road to the sea; on the left, by degrees, towers into sight immediately overhead the majesty of the Ch'in Ling, flecked with occasional snow-fields. In a vast curve the great range sweeps across the breadth of Shênsi, thus dividing the province into two halves and two climates; here it curves round towards the Yellow River, and the river and the mountains on each side of it, converging to this juncture, thus form the gate of the Chinese Empire, the key to Peking and all the North-west.

'Here, almost hidden until you have entered it, amid converging steeps of the downs, lurks the strong city of T'ung Kuan, with powerful walls climbing the hills all round. The power that holds T'ung Kuan holds all the Central Empire, holds Turkestan and Tibet, has power of life and death over the Imperial City and the coastal provinces; for this is the one channel of communication between Peking and all the inland roads away to Moscow and Lhasa. The Ch'in Ling cuts the Empire, in fact, into two halves: there

is one road to the coast from the north, down through the defiles of T'ung Kuan; and only one other, down the yet more difficult defiles of the Yangtze in the south. No wonder, then, that T'ung Kuan is jealously held and stringently fortified. . . .

'On leaving T'ung Kuan you emerge into the vast plain of Shênsi. In ever-increasing magnificence the Ch'in Ling curve away on your left.'

Such then was the nature of the country in which Tu Fu – with the exception of the years in early youth when he travelled in what we call to-day Kiangsu, Chêkiang and Shantung – passed forty-eight years of his life, and which he then left, to return to no more.

The city of Ch'ang An itself lay West of T'ung Kuan at an altitude of 1,600 feet on the banks of the clear Wei River, and to the North of the Ch'in Ling range which with its steep rocks, perpendicular paths, rushing torrents and gloomy forests creates a barrier difficult to surmount. Sian, to use its present name, has changed greatly since the days of T'ang, and although certain monuments such as the two pagodas Hsiao Yen T'a and the Ta Yen T'a remain, almost all trace of former buildings has vanished. The maps, however, in the *Ch'ang An Chih*, the 'Record' of the District, enable us to trace the erstwhile position of the most important edifices. Dr. Osvald Sirén made a journey to Sian some six years ago and carried out careful measurements, from which he concluded that the South wall of the present city is probably where the South wall of the Imperial city stood in Tu Fu's day – but nothing can be certified until scientific excavations have been made. The site of Ta Ming Kung, Intense Brilliance Palace, can be identified, and the mud terrace which forms the substructure of one of the large halls, stands beyond the northern wall of Sian city. Farrar says:

'Alas! the ruins of the T'ang Palace give even more work to the imagination and less to the eye than do those of the Brazen Palace at Anuradhapura. You pass through the tunnelled archway of its wall and you find yourself in a vast rectangle of perfectly level lawn on which no trace whatever of human habitation remains to disturb the unbroken plain of the turf, except that at the far end there stands an irregular mass of rock. And on this, they say, remains the hand-print of the Dowager Empress Wu.'

Ch'ang An stood on what the Chinese call 'the Central Plain,' situate 'between the Passes.' This latter term is explained in the *Tz'ŭ Yüan* by a quotation from the *Kuan Chung Chi, Between the Passes Record:*

In the East from Han Kuan (the Pass in Honan through which Lao Tzŭ passed when he gave the *Tao Tê Ching* to the Warden there), at the West, to Lung Kuan (Pass of the Dragon Mound) District, these two Passes intervening, is said to be Kuan Chung, in the Centre of Passes.

The term is sometimes used in a broader manner to mean 'all within the Four Quarters,' but for the interpretation of T'ang history the above definition is correct.

In addition to these two Passes, the T'ung Kuan at the East and the Yü Mên, Jade Gate Pass, to the far West, are continually mentioned by Chinese poets.

Few Occidental travellers, as I have said, have traversed Shênsi, but not long ago a British Consular official, Mr. Teichman, followed what must have been the very route described by Tu Fu in 'Travelling North' from Fêng Hsiang to Yen Nan just North of Fu Chou. I quote a couple of extracts from his account of the journey:

'After a couple of days' rest at Fenghsiang we started on a long tour of the loess country of Northern Shensi, the furthest point of which was to be Yenan Fu. There being nothing in the nature of a main road in that direction from where we found ourselves, . . . we had to apply . . . the plan of proceeding from one district city to another in the required direction until we struck the highway from Hsian to Yenan at Yao Chou. Between Fenghsiang and

Yao Chou our route took us across a vast plateau of loess, which . . . reaches in the N.W. a height of over 4,000 feet. It has a marked slope to the S.E. and is intersected by the deep cañon of the Ching River and the ravines of many other streams all flowing in the same directions, and by innumerable rifts and crevasses in the loess from ten to five hundred feet in depth. Travel up and down this plateau along its slope between N.W. and S.E. is easy, but transversely from S.W. to N.E., the line of our march, most trying and arduous, owing to the necessity of constantly crossing the perpendicular rifts in the loess, varying from the tremendous cañon of the Ching River, nearly a thousand feet in depth, to a dry crevasse a hundred feet deep. All these rifts trend in the same direction as the slope of the plateau, i.e. S.E., and all have perpendicular walls. In order to avoid these rifts, which increase in size and frequency as the plateau descends, our route kept as much as possible to the high ground. . . .

'Fu Chou, now Fu Hsien, a second-class district city, is a fortress of great antiquity guarding this highway into the heart of ancient China against the invasions of the hordes of barbarians from the North. It fills up most of the valley with its walls climbing up the hillside. Since the Mongol ceased to threaten Fu Chou has entirely lost its former importance, and is now in a most miserable and decayed condition. . . .

'In the centre of the town is an old tower containing an ancient bronze bell of fine workmanship dating from the T'ang Dynasty, the only object of value which survives the periodical raids. From Fu Chou a track leads westwards to Ch'in Yang in Kansu, one of the very few east to west trails in these parts.'

This westward track was probably the one upon which Tu Fu started in his attempt to reach Ling Wu and join the Heir Apparent in A.D. 756, an attempt frustrated by his capture. The loess ravines described by Mr. Teichman resemble those referred to by Tu Fu in 'Fleeing from P'êng Ya,' although on the journey treated in that poem Tu Fu and his family came to Fu Chou from Pai Shui.

The country traversed after Tu Fu left Hua Chou in Ch'ien Yüan second year, being A.D. 759, will be described in another volume.

Historical Year Record

YEAR RECORD OF TU FU'S LIFE AND CERTAIN RELEVANT EVENTS DURING THE T'ANG DYNASTY

(The initials 'B.D.' refer to entries in the *Biographical Dictionary* by Professor H. A. Giles. The asterisks indicate that the individual referred to is mentioned in the Biographical Index of this volume.)

TU FU'S LIFE, FIRST YEAR

Ruler: Jui Tsung. *nien hao:* Hsien T'ien, 1st year.
A.D. 712.

In the third year, First Moon, of Ch'ing Yün, Bright Clouds, the *nien hao* was changed to T'ai Chi, Great Extremity; during the Fifth Moon to Yen Ho, Protracted Harmony; and in the Eighth Moon to Hsien T'ien, First Heaven.

The Master was born.

Li Tan, the Emperor Jui Tsung, B.D. 1207, abdicated in favour of his third son *Li Lung-chi, B.D. 1172, who when he ascended the throne was aged but twenty-seven. His reign title was Hsüan Tsung, and he is often also called Ming Huang, the Bright Emperor. He was wise, a good leader, respected by his officials and beloved by the members of his family, to whom he was devoted.

TU FU'S LIFE, SECOND YEAR.

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 1st year.
A.D. 713.

Hsien T'ien, second year, Twelfth Moon, *nien hao*, was altered to K'ai Yüan, Opening of Origins.

TU FU'S LIFE, THIRD YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 2nd year.
A.D. 714.

Buddhism had greatly increased under Wu Hou, the

monks then numbering over twelve thousand. In response to a memorial from the Minister *Yao Ch'ung, B.D. 2431, they were ordered to disperse. All did so except the old and ill. It was forbidden to honour Buddhist images or to have relations with monks.

Traders came via the Country of Lions (Ceylon), where they had been in search of simples. They told marvellous tales of the birds and beasts in their own country, probably Sumatra.

TU FU'S LIFE, FOURTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 3rd year.

A.D. 715.

The Master saw the Lady Kung-sun perform the posturing dance of the Two-edged Sword.

More intimate relations developed with certain of the Central Asian tribes.[1] The T'u Fan or Tibetans joined with the Ta Shih or Arabs, who then inhabited what we to-day call Persia, and tried to place a certain A Liao Ta on the throne of Pa Han Na or Farghāna, a principality lying South of Lake Balkash, to the North-west of Eastern Turkestan, forming a barrier between these two states. Had they accomplished their purpose, Central Asia would have been under an allied domination, and who knows how the course of history would have been changed! The King of Pa Han Na, however, hastened to An Hsi and asked help of the Chinese, and General Chang Hsiao-sung was despatched to his aid, marching at the head of ten thousand Chinese and Tartar troops. He attacked and completely routed A Liao Ta. As a result of this victory eight kingdoms of Central Asia submitted to China, among them the Ta Shih, whose power

[1] See Glossary under term Tu Chüeh.

was speedily increasing. The Chinese General returned, covered with glory, having established the King of Pa Han Na on his throne, and having erected a column in his country recording the event.

TU FU'S LIFE, SEVENTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 6th year. A.D. 718.

The Master chanted 'Poem of the Love Pheasant.'

In the Eleventh Moon the T'u Fan or Tibetans concluded a treaty of peace with China at Ch'ang An. Intercourse by sea between China and the Near East is noted.

TU FU'S LIFE, NINTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 8th year. A.D. 720.

The Master wrote 'large characters.'

TU FU'S LIFE, ELEVENTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 10th year. A.D. 722.

A rebellion on the South-west Borders under a Tai chief who, having taken thirty-two prefectures, had proclaimed himself the Black Emperor, was put down, and what we call Tongking was retaken.

TU FU'S TWELFTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 11th year. A.D. 723.

The Emperor, taking advantage of peace, made a progress in the northern provinces, visiting the cradle of his race in Shansi.

TU FU'S THIRTEENTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 12th year.
A.D. 724.

The Empress, Wang Shih, having no children, had addressed herself, through the intermediacy of her brother, to a Buddhist priest who interceded with the constellation Nan Pei Tou on her behalf. She and her brother were degraded from rank; the priest suffered death and the Empress died of grief during the Tenth Moon.

The Emperor, on the advice of his Minister *Chang Yüeh, B.D. 134, visited the eastern provinces and sacrificed to T'ai Shan, Peak of the East. *Fang Kuan 'did a writing' on this event, and Chang Yüeh, much impressed, offered it up to the Ruler. Kuan was given official rank.

TU FU'S FOURTEENTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 13th year.
A.D. 725.

In this year, or the next, the Master started on his travels.

Relations were entered into with the Oriental Turks who desired a Princess from the Central State as a bride for their Ruler, and who were aggrieved that although their envoy was received with honour, no bride was sent.

TU FU'S FIFTEENTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 14th year.
A.D. 726.

*Li Lin-fu, B.D. 1170, became Yu Shih Chung Ch'êng. He obtained influence over the Ruler's favourite concubine *Wu Hui-fei by promising to protect her sons, then in high favour, in case of difficulties.

A census was taken. Families not in the service of the State were computed at 7,069,565, which made a total of about 41,419,712 souls, or 'mouths' as the Chinese would say.

During the Tenth Moon an Embassy arrived from Hei Shui Ho (in Manchuria) to pay tribute.

New difficulties with the T'u Fan or Tibetans which entailed fighting near the Jade Gate and on the shores of the Ch'ing Hai or Lake Kokonor arose. The campaign was indecisive but the Tibetans occupied Kua Chou.

TU FU'S SIXTEENTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 15th year.
A.D. 727.

*Li Hêng, son of the Emperor and the Lady Yang, now aged seventeen, was created Chung Wang, Prince Loyalty.

The T'u Fan approached Bilga Khan, Chief of the Northern Tu Chüeh, inviting him to join them, but the Khan forthwith sent their letter to the Emperor who, enchanted at his conduct, gave him permission to trade in the town of Shou Chiang on the bank of the Yellow River to the North of the Ordos country; furthermore China promised to make the Khan an annual gift of silk, and in return procured necessary cavalry. The Khan was friendly and humane; his appellation being 'Wise Prince of the Left.'

TU FU'S SEVENTEENTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 16th year.
A.D. 728.

The Emperor despatched an envoy to confer the title of King on An Ting, the Prince of Kashghar.

TU FU'S NINETEENTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 18th year.
A.D. 730.

The T'u Fan sent an embassy to China to decide terms of peace and beg the hand of a Princess for their chief.

The Hsi and Ch'i Tan, Turki tribes of Eastern Mongolia, attacked the border. Li Hêng, Prince Chung or Loyalty, was appointed Ho Pei Tao Yüan Shuai, Commander-in-Chief of the Circuit North of the Stream, and led soldiers against these Mongols.

TU FU'S TWENTIETH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 19th year.
A.D. 731.

The Master still travelled in Wu and Yüeh during this 'the fragile year of Capping.'

The T'u Fan sent an embassy to obtain the promised Princess; they also begged that a set of the Chinese classical writings be sent them. Opinions at Court differed as to whether this second request should be granted or not. A high officer argued that if the fierce T'u Fan, hereditary enemies of the Central State, were instructed and thus enabled to add wisdom to ferocity, their power would become fatal. Another official replied, expatiating on the humanizing effect of education, and expressing it as his belief that when the T'u Fan had absorbed the learning in the sacred books they would no longer wish to fight. The books were sent.

The Ch'i Tan were pacified.

TU FU'S TWENTY-FIRST YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 20th year.

A.D. 732.

A census gave 7,861,236 families totalling about 45,431,268 mouths.

Serious troubles with the Ch'i Tan on the north-east borders again broke out.

TU FU'S TWENTY-SECOND YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 21st year.

A.D. 733.

The Empire had been divided by the Emperor T'ai Tsung a century earlier into ten Tao, or Circuits, which are indicated on the map at the end of the volume by numbers, as follows: – 1. Kuan Nei, Within the Passes; 2. Ho Tung, East of the Stream; 3. Ho Pei, North of the Stream; 4. Lung Yu, the Dragon Mound; 5. Ho Nan, South of the Stream; 6. Shan Nan, South of the Hills; 7. Chien Nan, South of Two-edged Sword Mountain; 8. Huai Nan, South of Huai; 9. Chiang Nan, South of the River; 10. Ling Nan, South of the Mountain Range. The Chinese call the Yellow River the *ho* or 'stream,' and the Yangtze the *chiang* or 'river.'

During this year Hsüan Tsung made further divisions as follows: – the districts surrounding the East and West Capitals were each called a *ch'i*, or a demesne pertaining to the Ruler; Shan Nan and Chiang Nan were each divided into eastern and western districts.

TU FU'S TWENTY-THIRD YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 22nd year.

A.D. 734.

Nieh Li was recognized as Chief of the Ch'i Tan. Bilga Khan died and was succeeded by his son T'êng Li,

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 23rd year.

A.D. 735.

The Master returned from Wu and Yüeh, and went to the Capital, where he failed to pass the examinations.

An extremely beautiful woman, a member of the Yang clan, named Yü-huan or Jade Armlet, passed into the harem of Shou Wang, Prince Longevity, son of the Emperor and Wu Hui-fei.

Fresh difficulties with the T'u Fan. The Chinese Warden of the Marches, Ts'ui Hsi-i, had concluded a solemn agreement with the T'u Fan Commander, each promising to refrain from further attack, and in token of good faith each had sacrificed a white dog. Unfortunately the King of Tibet attacked a tribe living in Little P'o Lü; their ruler instantly besought help from the Chinese Court. This help was accorded. The troops of Ts'ui Hsi-i, under the command of another General, were sent forward against the T'u Fan to whom amity had been sworn, surprised them to the West of Ch'ing Hai and put them to flight. The T'u Fan were naturally furious and all thoughts of peace were at an end. Ts'ui Hsi-i, who had made the compact and who was honourable and upright, died of grief.

Nieh Li, whom the Chinese had recognized as Chief of the Ch'i Tan, rewarded them by ravaging their frontiers and defeating their General, *An Lu-shan, B.D. 11, who was brought to Court in disgrace. However, he so charmed Hsüan Tsung that his defeat was forgiven and he was appointed to a position in Shantung. This in spite of protestations by the wise Minister *Chang Chiu-ling, B.D. 38, whose influence was unfortunately waning.

He had made himself unpopular with Wu Hui-fei and her minion Li Lin-fu by his opposition to the suggested banishment of Li Ying, the Heir Apparent, and his two brothers (see Li Lin-fu's life); nor was it long before Chang Chiu-ling was dismissed from the Court and transferred to a post in the North-east. Li Lin-fu took his place as Minister. From this time forth none dared express an honest opinion; all dreaded the power of Li Lin-fu.

TU FU'S TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 24th year.
A.D. 736.

The control of the literary examinations was placed under the Li Pu or Board of Rites.

TU FU'S TWENTY-SIXTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 25th year.
A.D. 737.

Li Ying, the Heir Apparent, was 'found guilty of fault.' He and his two brothers were sentenced to banishment, but on second thoughts were put to death.

Li Lin-fu became Chin Kuo Kung, Duke of the Chin State. He recommended that Shou Wang, Prince Longevity, son of Wu Hui-fei, should be made Heir Apparent, but the Ruler chose Li Hêng, Chung Wang, Prince Loyalty, for the post. Li Lin-fu hated Li Hêng and from this moment never ceased trying to injure him.

In the Twelfth Moon, Wu Hui-fei, on whom the Emperor doted, died.

TU FU'S TWENTY-SEVENTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 26th year.
A.D. 738.

The *T'ang Tsêng Yao* states that the Han Lin Yüan

was established during this year. (Some authorities date its establishment as being seventeen years later.)

*Yang Yü-huan, who had withdrawn to a Taoist nunnery, was introduced to the Imperial harem, and speedily rose to the highest rank among concubines, that of Kuei Fei. She is popularly known as Yang Kuei-fei, B.D. 2394.

The T'u Fan continually attacked the Border cities, sometimes successfully.

An embassy arrived at Ch'ang An under the grandson of P'i Lo Ko, King of Nan Chao, a principality which had existed south of Ta Li in Yünnan since the beginning of the seventh century.

TU FU'S TWENTY-EIGHTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 27th year.
A.D. 739.

The spirit of Confucius was raised to the rank of Prince; his tablet was placed facing South, and the ceremonies were altered to correspond with this change.

Li Lin-fu, who had surrounded the Heir Apparent with spies, reported that Li Hêng was 'planning treachery.' Hsüan Tsung at once removed his *fei* or principal concubine and degraded her brother.

The King of Nan Chao sent several Man Tzŭ chiefs, whom he had made prisoner, to Ch'ang An as a gift to the Emperor.

TU FU'S TWENTY-NINTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 28th year.
A.D. 740.

A census was taken. The population had grown to 144,431,070 people.

Certain T'u Fan or Tibetans were traitors to their own cause and assisted the Chinese greatly.

TU FU'S THIRTIETH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* K'ai Yüan, 29th year. A.D. 741.

The Master at Lo Yang, the Eastern Capital. He sacrificed at the Festival of Cold Food to the spirit of a far-off ancestor.

Great confusion among the tribes of Central Asia, who disputed ceaselessly among themselves. *Kao Hsien-chih, B.D. 952, was appointed to a high post at An Hsi beyond the Jade Gate and commanded the troops of the Four Garrisons, at Karashar, Ch'iu Tzŭ, Kashghar and Khotan.

TU FU'S THIRTY-FIRST YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:*[1] T'ien Pao, 1st revolution. A.D. 742.

The Master at Lo Yang, the Eastern Capital.

Hsüan Tsung became more and more devoted to the lovely daughter of the Yang clan. The Chieh Tu Shih of Chien Nan, realizing this fact, brought *Yang Chao (later known as Kuo-chung), B.D. 2396, a cousin of the lady, to his official residence and made him secretary, helping him to rise to the position of Chien Ch'a Yü Shih before the Emperor, who, liking him, gave him the name of Kuo-chung, Loyal to the State. He was quite unequal to the position, and much dissatisfaction was felt in the official body, but Li Lin-fu was glad to find someone whom he could 'use' in his attempts to defame Li Hêng, the Heir Apparent, and Kuo-chung's power grew.

[1] The *nien hao* was changed during the First Moon, and the years were referred to by the term *tsai*, 'a revolution of time.'

TU FU'S THIRTY-SECOND YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 2nd revolution. A.D. 743.

The Chinese General Wang Chung profited by the confusion existing among the tribes of Central Asia and destroyed a large part of the Eleven Hordes. The Hui Ho or Uighurs and the Ko Lo Lu or Karlouks combined and elected a chief whose appointment was confirmed by Hsüan Tsung. The name chosen for this Chief was Huai Jên Khan.

TU FU'S THIRTY-THIRD YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 3rd revolution. A.D. 744.

The Master in Lo Yang, the Eastern Capital.

*Li T'ai-po, B.D. 1181, travelled in the vicinity.

Huai Jên Khan made himself master of the Eleven Hordes and killed one of his principal rivals, whose head he sent to Hsüan Tsung.

TU FU'S THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 4th revolution. A.D. 745.

The Master in Ch'i Chou with *Kao Shih, B.D. 960, and Li T'ai-po. In the summer he accompanied *Li Yung, B.D. 1242, on an excursion.

Huai Jên Khan, Chief of the Uighur Tribes, died master of wide territories, extending on the East to Baikal, on the West to the Altai Mountains, and on the South to the Great Desert Ta Mo. The Khan's son succeeded as Chief and the Uighurs were divided into Nine Tribes.

Chinese influence in Central Asia seemed rather on the decline, while the power of the T'u Fan or Tibetans increased.

TU FU'S THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 5th revolution. A.D. 746.

The Master returned to the Capital.

*Kao Li-shih, B.D. 956, the chief eunuch, was appointed 'Commandant of the Frontiers,' a grave infringement of accepted procedure.

Hsüan Tsung enjoyed visiting and arranging for the preservation of ancient sites; he did much building and superintended alterations. The buildings at Li Shan had been known as Wên Ch'üan Kung, Warm Springs Palace; the name was now altered to Hua Ch'ing Kung, Glory of Purity Palace. *Fang Kuan, whose learning was great and whose taste was excellent, proved of great assistance.

TU FU'S THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 6th revolution. A.D. 747.

The Master responded to the Imperial Decree but 'stepped down, having failed.' Remained in Ch'ang An.

An Imperial Decree called men of ability in All-Below-the-Sky to assemble 'below the hub of the wheel of government' and test their learning. Li Lin-fu ordered that the examination be held in the Shang Shu Shêng. All were sent down.

The T'u Fan, having gained the aid of the King of P'o Lü and other kingdoms, ceased paying tribute to China; and Chinese Generals tried in vain to force them to tread once more the path of duty. This question of overlordship in Central Asia was an important one for China, affecting both her prestige and material power.

Hsüan Tsung decided to strike a great blow. Kao Hsien-chih, leading ten thousand men, foot and horse, left Ch'iu Tzŭ and marched South to the Hindu Kush and beyond, conducting a remarkable and victorious campaign which carried the Chinese Empire to the furthest point it has ever reached.

Meanwhile *Ko-shu Han, B.D. 980, was lying in wait for the T'u Fan on the frontier and prepared a successful ambush into which large bodies fell. He was created Chieh Tu Shih of Lung Yu. (See Map: No. 4.)

TU FU'S THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 7th revolution. A.D. 748.

The Master at Ch'ang An.

Yang Kuei-fei's three elder sisters were all given rank in one day; her elder brother was appointed to an official post at the same time.

The King of Nan Chao died and was succeeded by his son, Ko Lo Fêng, who received Imperial investiture. Displeased at the conduct of the Chinese Commissioner, he complained in vain to Hsüan Tsung; revolted; overcame the troops sent against him, and made an alliance with the T'u Fan. The defeat he had inflicted on Imperial soldiers was concealed from the Emperor.

On the North-west border, where he built cities, Ko-shu Han, at the height of his powers, was Governor of Lung Yu.

TU FU'S THIRTY-EIGHTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 8th revolution. A.D. 749.

The Master at Ch'ang An and Lo Yang.

Li Lin-fu's power grew and grew. The people became

more and more angry. Chao Fên-chang presented a Memorial to the Throne recounting twenty of Lin-fu's faults. Before this Memorial could reach Hsüan Tsung, Lin-fu heard of its existence, whereupon he caused Fên-chang to be seized and put to death. Lin-fu was deeply concerned to 'keep his preserve,' that is keep the assembly of Ministers, from intrusion by learned men.

Ko-shu Han, at the head of sixty thousand men, inflicted a terrible defeat on the T'u Fan, but at the cost of half his troops.

The Jabghū of T'u Lo Ho, Tukhāristan, besought imperial aid against the King of Chieh Shih, a neighbouring Prince who had allied himself with the T'u Fan and intercepted communication between Little P'o Lü and the South; the jabghū proposed a plan by which the Chinese possessions beyond the Pamirs would have been united to Kashgharia, thus presenting an impregnable barrier to the incursions of the T'u Fan.

TU FU'S THIRTY-NINTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 9th revolution. A.D. 750.

The Master at Ch'ang An.

An Lu-shan by this time commanded all the troops North of the 'stream,' i.e. the Yellow River.

In the Second Moon, Kao Hsien-chih responded to the appeal for help on the part of the Jabghū of Tukhāristan and was again victorious, making the King of Chieh Shih prisoner. He also made prisoner the King of Shih or Tashkent, whose son, escaping, took refuge with the Hu tribe, his northern neighbours, and complained bitterly of the treatment Kao Hsien-chih had meted out. The Hu felt great irritation and made advances to the Ta

Shih, or Arabs, in the hope of attacking the Four Garrisons in company with them.

TU FU'S FORTIETH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 10th revolution. A.D. 751.

The Master at Ch'ang An. Handed up the Great Rites Fu; Hsüan Tsung delighted: sent him to Chi Hsien Yüan to await results.

Yang Kuo-chung was appointed Chieh Tu Shih of what is now Szechwan and proceeded thither; asked for seventy thousand men, who, led by Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung, were sent to attack Ho Lo Fêng beyond the waters at Lu Chou and were put to rout. Kuo-chung not only concealed this defeat from Hsüan Tsung but reported a great victory.

The T'ang history ascribes the disasters of these two campaigns, when the best soldiers of China were defeated, to various reasons: climatic conditions were very trying in the South; rations were not properly organized; the 'hill breath' was bad for Northerners. The result was that 'not the wheel of a chariot' returned. The people felt angry and resentful, but no one dared say a word to the Emperor.

Troubles were not confined to the South-west. In the North-east An Lu-shan, himself a Ch'i Tan, marched against the Ch'i Tan tribes with the troops of three provinces. His advance guard consisted of two thousand Ch'i Tan horsemen, who when they arrived in their own country, went over to the Ch'i Tan side. An Lu-shan was vanquished and fled with hardly twenty horsemen. He asked for reinforcements, which were sent under the command of a tribesman who had risen high in Imperial

favour and who had been given the Chinese cognomen Li Hsien-chung. He was no friend to An Lu-shan, and instead of going to Lu-shan's assistance, proceeded to his own country. Lu-shan was therefore in a very difficult position.

In Central Asia also great difficulties arose. Kao Hsien-chih, becoming aware of the alliance between the Hu and the Ta Shih or Arabs, joined his troops to those of the King of Pa Han Na and advanced against these last at the head of thirty thousand men and met them at the town of Ta Lo Ssŭ. The armies were in contact for five days. Meanwhile the Ko Lo Lu or Karlouk tribes in his rear revolted, and Kao Hsien-chih, finding himself attacked in front and behind, suffered, on the banks of the Talas river, what might well be called annihilation.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of this battle: it decided the fate of the western portion of Central Asia, which from that moment fell more and more under the domination of the Caliph in contradistinction to that of the Son of Heaven.

Chinese prisoners were carried back to Samarqand, where they introduced the making of paper, which until then had been known only in China, and knowledge of which the Arabs speedily spread to the Four Quarters.

TU FU'S FORTY-FIRST YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 11th revolution. A.D. 752.

The Master at Ch'ang An.

An Imperial Edict ordered examination in literary essays, over which Li Lin-fu presided. The Master was sent down.

The southern Man Tzŭ attacked Szechwan, and the people begged that Yang Kuo-chung, who was visiting

Ch'ang An, should return. Li Lin-fu, jealous of the favour the Emperor showed Kuo-chung, urged that he be sent. Kuo-chung departed in tears.

During the Tenth Moon Li Lin-fu fell ill. Kuo-chung returned from the West a day or two before Lin-fu died, and succeeded him as Minister of the Right.

TU FU'S FORTY-SECOND YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 12th revolution. A.D. 753.

The Master at Ch'ang An.

Yang Kuo-chung, whose power grew speedily, recognized none of the proprieties in his public or his private life. At this time An Lu-shan was much beloved by the Emperor and his martial power was 'held firmly in his hand.' The soldiers in the North-east were under his control. Kuo-chung felt bitter jealousy and continually said to Hsüan Tsung: 'Lu-shan is of a treacherous pattern.' Spies reported this to Lu-shan, who feared Kuo-chung.

The Emperor, his mind filled with suspicion, despatched Lu-shan to the frontier. Lu-shan went, his feelings a mixture of anger and alarm. He plotted to kill Kuo-chung, who was thus undermining his influence. The ensuing rebellion had its roots in the antagonism between these two men.

TU FU'S FORTY-THIRD YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 13th revolution. A.D. 754.

The Master at Ch'ang An. When the Ruler renewed the appointment of Hua Shan as Peak of the West, he handed up *fu* of the 'Western Peak.'

A census was taken: it gave 9,619,254 families, equalling about 52,880,488 mouths.

An expedition led by Li Mi against Ho Lo Fêng, King of Nan Chao, was decimated by hunger and plague, and suffered defeat at the hands of the King's son aided by the T'u Fan.

TU FU'S FORTY-FOURTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 14th revolution. A.D. 755.

The Master was appointed Wei of Ho Hsi, but did not accept. Was then appointed to post of Yü Wei Shuai Fu Chou Ts'ao Ts'an Chün in the Official Residence of the Heir Apparent. In the Eleventh Moon he travelled to Fêng Hsien.

During the Eleventh Moon An Lu-shan 'lifted his mask' and, leaving Fan Yang at the head of a hundred and twenty thousand men, took road to the South, announcing that his intention was to kill Yang Kuo-chung, therefore 'people, soldiers, everybody hated Kuo-chung as being the cause of disaster.'

Hsüan Tsung wished to appoint the Heir Apparent as Regent and himself lead the troops against Lu-shan, and discussed this matter with Kuo-chung, who, terrified, sent for his 'sisters,' the ladies of the Yang clan, and talked over the matter with them. All were alarmed. They knew full well that if Li Hêng, Prince Loyalty, came to power, he would kill them all. The 'sisters' hurried to Kuei-fei, weeping and expressing their fears. Kuei-fei forthwith approached the Emperor, her dress in disorder and a clod of earth between her lovely lips: such is the custom when a person wishes to suggest that he is guilty of some offence and desires to be killed. Her grief melted the Emperor, who abandoned his project.

Ko-shu Han, the Governor of Lung Yu, was appointed a Yüan Shuai, and came from the West leading twenty times ten thousand soldiers to protect T'ung Kuan. Li Yüan, Prince of Yung, and Kao Hsien-chih organized the defence of T'ung Kuan, and *Yen Chên-ching, B.D. 2461, that of Ho Pei, North of the River. Meanwhile An Lu-shan advanced carefully, crossed the Yellow River, took Lo Yang and proclaimed himself Hsiung Wu, Emperor of the Yen dynasty.

TU FU'S FORTY-FIFTH YEAR

Ruler: Hsüan Tsung. *nien hao:* T'ien Pao, 15th revolution. A.D. 756.

Ruler: Su Tsung. *nien hao:* Chih Tê, 1st revolution (change made in Seventh Moon).

The Master proceeded in the Fifth Moon from Fêng Hsien to Pai Shui; in the Sixth Moon from Pai Shui to Fu Chou; hearing that Su Tsung had 'Ascended the Seat,' he hurried, although weak and debilitated, towards the Travelling Palace, fell into the hands of the rebels and was taken to Ch'ang An as prisoner.

T'ung Kuan, the Lofty Barrier Pass, is almost impregnable, and Ko-shu Han, the seasoned old warrior, intended to hold it to the death. Yang Kuo-chung in Ch'ang An, however, consumed with anxiety and impatient to see the hated An Lu-shan crushed to dust, did not cease urging that Ko-shu Han be ordered to advance through the Pass and annihilate the rebels. His persistence finally prevailed; the fated order was sent, and against his conviction Han, with a heavy heart, led his men out through the towering loess walls which made the approach to the Pass so difficult. The result was fatal.

On the ninth day of the Sixth Moon his force suffered crushing defeat and Han himself was seized. One does not like to believe the accounts which state that he then took service under the rebel Lu-shan; one prefers to credit the account in the *Chiu T'ang Shu*, which relates that Lu-shan, knowing his conquest could never be 'perfected' while Han, the hero, still lived, put him secretly to death.

Be this as it may, the Lofty Barrier Pass was now unguarded, Lu-shan had but to march through and advance on Ch'ang An: and in Ch'ang An terror seized upon the inhabitants both high and low. The Bright Emperor watched anxiously from the Flower and Calyx Belvedere for the 'fires of peace' which, lighted each night on little watch towers, built a few *li* apart, made a shining chain of security between Ch'ang An and the Pass, a signal that all was well: and on the twelfth night of the Sixth Moon – there was no chain of light.

It is not difficult to imagine the hurrying to and fro; the breathless consultations; the hasty decision, at the instance of Yang Kuo-chung, that the Ruler should not 'fly' but instantly depart upon an Imperial Progress to the West, to the Province of Four Streams. And depart he did in that chill hour which during the hot season precedes dawn: the Chinese call it 'icy dawn.' A mere handful of people, pale with fright, accompanied the Son of Heaven upon this pitiful Progress. The Commanding General of the Dragon's Majesty, or as we should say, the Commander of the Imperial Body-guard, General Ch'ên Hsüan-li, Yang Kuo-chung, his wife, Yang Kuei-fei, her three sisters the Ladies Han Kuo, Ch'in Kuo and Kuo Kuo, the son and daughter of Lady Kuo Kuo; Kao Li-shih whose immense form towered above the rest;

besides these there came Li Hêng, Prince Loyalty the Heir Apparent, his intrepid consort Chang Liang-ti, his children and a few of the ladies from his harem: on the thirteenth day of the Sixth Moon these and a certain quota of armed men passed, as day broke, through the Gate of Lingering Autumn in a downpour of rain. At dawn, after the party had crossed Wei Waters, the bridges were destroyed in order to prevent pursuit – so runs the account in the Life of Yang Kuo-chung from the *Chiu T'ang Shu*. It is but fair to add that in Hsüan Tsung's Life it is stated that the Emperor forbade that the bridges be destroyed, as he shrank from closing the way of escape to those left in the ill-fated Capital.

During the hour of the Dragon, before nine o'clock in the morning by our reckoning, the miserable party reached Wang Hsien I, Gazing Towards Virtuous Men Posthouse, at Hsien Yang. They found no food for men or horses; the functionaries had fled; the post-house was empty. By noon the Emperor, who 'sat at his Palace Door' under a large tree, had not partaken of food; the old peasants, weeping, brought millet, and a dish was hastily prepared of which the Son of Heaven gratefully partook, then the party hurried on.

The second day the post-house at Ma Wei P'o, a rocky declivity, was reached; the soldiers, who had still not eaten, were famished, their rage boiled up, and the General of the Dragon's Majesty feared they would rebel. He therefore addressed them, saying:

> Now All Below the Sky falls in ruins, is scattered; the ten thousand chariots of the Imperial forces are shaken, are ready to overturn. Is this not because Yang Kuo-chung has pared and peeled the ignorant country people? Officials who serve at Court, men out of office, are bitterly resentful (saying) 'Has he brought us to this?' If we do not kill him and thus

gain the gratitude of all Below the Sky, how can this deep resentment, stretching to the Four Seas, be checked?

All replied: 'Indeed we have thought this for a long time past! If in carrying out the matter our bodies die, we are willing that they should do so.'

At that moment a T'u Fan envoy happened to pass; he addressed Kuo-chung, who was standing at the post-house door. The frantic soldiers, glad of any excuse, declared that Kuo-chung planned rebellion with the T'u Fan, and falling upon him killed him dead; one account states 'the soldiers gnawed his flesh.' In their frenzy they slew also the Ladies Han and Ch'in, and declaring that the root of the trouble had not been cut, demanded the life of Yang Kuei-fei. The Son of Heaven, hiding his face in his ample sleeve, consented that she be given over to meet her fate. Kao Li-shih led her forward and himself tightened the noose by which she was hanged in the Sainted Figures Hall of the post-house.

Kuo-chung's wife, the Lady Kuo Kuo, her son and her daughter, when they witnessed these terrible happenings, quickly mounted horses and galloped away, galloped without halting to Ch'ên Ts'ang Hsien, where the District Magistrate, recognizing them, ordered pursuit. They were seized in a bamboo grove and Kuo Kuo's son and daughter were immediately put to death. Kuo-chung's wife, realizing that escape was impossible, cried to Kuo Kuo, 'Pray, quickly kill me.' Kuo Kuo ran her through with a two-edged sword and then cut her own throat, but did not die. The Magistrate ordered that she be placed upon a cart and taken to the prison. Defiant to the end, she demanded, 'Is this the behaviour of soldiers of the State or of brigands?' 'There *are* brigands,' cried the men – they referred to the five households of Yang –

'but we are soldiers of the State.' The blood clotted in the beautiful Kuo Kuo's throat and she died.

Meanwhile at Ma Wei, Hsüan Tsung sat crushed and broken. General Ch'ên Hsüan-li approached, apologizing for Kuo-chung's death, but Hsüan Tsung, expressing his realization of the fact that Kuo-chung's insistence on Ko-shu Han's advance through the pass had been fatal, continued sadly:

> Audience Halls are fallen, no longer exist; the one hundred officials are led tied by their necks; Imperial concubines and the daughters of the Ruler have met with slaughter; soldiers overflow All Below the Sky; poison flows to the Four Seas; it is all disaster which Kuo-chung has called.

Presently, when his chariot was about to advance, the Emperor bade the Heir Apparent address and comfort the people of the one hundred surnames who had gathered about them, and the people weeping replied:

> Hu Barbarians are froward, contrary; rebelling, they turn their backs on Imperial Grace. The Lord Above is rejected and banished far from his throne. We his servants born in an Enlightened Period have been for succeeding generations the people of T'ang. We are willing to exert our strength with single mind, and in the interests of the country make war on the rebels. Pray, permit us to follow the Greater Son and recover Ch'ang An.

When these words were repeated to the Bright Emperor he said: 'These are indeed the instructions of Heaven,' and forthwith directed Kao Li-shih to arrange that the Heir Apparent and his entourage remain behind. The Imperial chariot then started for the West.

The histories give a detailed account of the journey, which ended on the eighteenth day of the Seventh Moon, when the Bright Emperor, his brilliance sadly dimmed, reached what is now Ch'êng Tu in Szechwan.

At Ma Wei, before following in the track of his Imperial Master, Kao Li-shih spoke with the Heir Apparent, using the Emperor's very words:

> It is well that you go. The people of the One Hundred Surnames gaze towards you for direction. Act with a heart of truth; do not betray their hopes; and do not let thoughts of Us disturb your mind. Furthermore the Hsi Jung from the West, the Pei Ti of the North are faithful to Us. The State now treads a path of danger and difficulty; We must obtain their aid. Do you make an effort to persuade them.

Now the Liang-ti or chief concubine of the Heir Apparent was the Lady Chang, whose grandmother had been Hsüan Tsung's aunt. She had cared for him after her sister, his mother, had been killed on retiring from an audience with the redoubtable Empress Wu; the Lady Chang was therefore a favourite with Hsüan Tsung. She was 'of ready address and her mind flew swift to the mark.' She realized that this appeal to the Heir Apparent to take over the direction of affairs was no opportunity to be lost, so she urged him to agree and take charge. Prince Chung, although loth to do so, turned therefore to the North, to Wei River, but the Pien Bridge was already broken, the water had risen, there were no boats. What was to be done? Recollecting the Chinese saying: 'Those who live near the water know the nature of fish, and those who live on the hills recognize the note of birds,' Prince Chung called upon the riverside people to help him. More than three thousand responded, and fearlessly entering the water, arranged the transportation of the party. A certain amount of confusion ensued because of a misunderstanding with soldiers who were fleeing from the rout at T'ung Kuan, and the weaklings of the party were drowned. But under the protection of Heaven, the

Heir Apparent with his favourite the Lady Chang, his two sons, Prince Kuang P'ing and Prince Chien Ning, and four divisions of the army, numbering however, all told, less than two thousand men, proceeded towards the North-west. The dangers of the road were many, and each time they lodged for the night the Lady Chang insisted upon occupying the front room. Her husband demurred, saying:

> To watch, ward, is not the affair of women. Why should you lodge at the front?

Chang Liang-ti replied:

> Now the Chief of the Household may stumble, may step into difficulties, dangers. Soldiers for guard not many. Perhaps there will be unexpected happenings. The Unworthy One herself can deal with them. Household Chief can use the back of the house to go out. Then whatever happens – no matter.

The people of the Hundred Surnames offered wine and beef by the roadside, and at nightfall they reached Yung Shou. Suddenly in the North-west, white clouds rose and assumed marvellous shapes, so that people said: 'It is the auspicious aura.' The party pressed forward, covering three hundred *li* in a day, but alas! the numbers became rapidly less and less, proving the truth of the Chinese proverb: 'A barren year discovers filial sons; a disordered state shows loyal officers.' The heart of the Heir Apparent was however cheered when at the post-house beyond the prefectual city of P'êng Yüan, the official Li Tsun, leading his soldiers, bringing clothing and food for men and horses, met the diminished party, which now numbered less than five hundred, and led them to P'êng Yüan. A halt was made, the Heir Apparent circulated a general call for aid, for horses, for fighting men,

and a few hundreds responded. He continued to P'ing Liang, still calling upon the people to rise in assistance.

The rebels had of course captured Ch'ang An, and everyone in the three prefectures surrounding the Capital knew that the Heir Apparent was trying to organize an advance and said hopefully one to the other: 'Many soldiers of our Prince will come,' while the rebels anxiously watched the western horizon, dreading the cloud of yellow dust which would herald Prince Chung's return. Although An Lu-shan sent his officials here and there to proclaim his pacific intentions to the populace, fear lurked in the hearts of the rebels, and the people would not receive the envoys. Meanwhile various leaders were organizing bands to check the rebels, and were consulting with each other and considering how they could put down the rebellion.

The Heir Apparent was meeting with success in his re-organization at P'ing Liang and was receiving deputations who urged him to make a base further North whence operations could proceed. His heart full of joy, the Heir Apparent agreed, and when they moved from P'ing Liang the five-coloured clouds of happiness hovered in empty space while cranes of longevity wheeled in the air. As the soldiers advanced a yellow dragon flew out from the place where the Heir Apparent had been living. Reaching the bend of the Yellow River South of Fêng Ming, Prince Chung realized that the stream which there runs in a net of waters would provide a 'heaven-made protection.' He therefore proposed to take his troops across and found a base upon the other side. Suddenly, however,

> great wind rose, dust, sand, flew; divided by half the road men and things could not be distinguished.

There was nothing to be done. No one could move against such a gale. Prince Chung turned his steps towards Ling Wu: instantly the wind dropped and Heaven was clear.

At length the official Wei Shao-yu had prepared everything – clothes, food and habitat for the Heir Apparent. A deputation under P'ei Mien and Tu Hung-chien waited upon him, saying:

> Now the rebels oppose the current of progress; the five cardinal virtues of men – humanity, rectitude, courtesy, knowledge and faith – are tangled in disorder. The poison flows through Han Valley Pass. Our Lord Above, wearied by diligent toil in the Great Post, has moved his Travelling Palace to the streams of Shu.
>
> Rivers intervene their torrents; mountains interpose sheer cliffs; the road by which Memorials can be presented and Imperial commands be requested is cut short.
>
> Necessity calls someone to return to care for Ancestral Tablets, Altars to Spirits of the Land, and to occupy the Spirit Throne.
>
> The people of the ten thousand surnames agree in their desire; they extol in their thoughts the clarity of Your enlightened intelligence.
>
> The intention of Heaven, the works of men, cannot be suppressed nor disregarded.
>
> We fall prostrate, we humbly entreat the son of Palace Halls to accord with the wishes of the people. Deny yourself in order to bring them joy, and pacify the Spirits of the Altars of the Land and the Altars of Grain.
>
> The Prince will then manifest his deep filial piety.

The Heir Apparent firmly refused, saying:

> Wait until rebels have ceased their opposition. Then I will go forth to meet, to follow obediently, the Firebird Chariot, and will reside quietly in the side apartments where dwells the Heir Apparent. I will attend the Emperor, and standing to the right or to the left, will serve the savoury viands. Is this not a joyful prospect? Why are my Lords so urgent?

P'ei Mien and his friends repeated their entreaties six times. The sixth time their words were very weighty and the Heir Apparent could no longer refuse. On the day Chia Tzŭ of the Seventh Moon he therefore ascended the Imperial Seat at Ling Wu. When the rites attendant upon the ceremony were ended, P'ei Mien, kneeling, said:

> Because opposing rebels have leant upon and desecrated them, the two Capitals have lost their protection.
>
> The Enlightened Lord has transferred the throne to His Son who stood below its steps, who will bring peace again under the eaves of the universe.
>
> We officials strike our heads to the ground and offer up the cry: 'A thousand, ten thousand, years of longevity.'

The Heir Apparent, however, sighed deeply, and tears ran down his face.

On the same day a Memorial was prepared for despatch to the Above Emperor, as Hsüan Tsung was to be called, and before night fell the Emperor Su Tsung appeared in person outside the South Gate of Ling Wu and addressed the people of the one hundred surnames, saying:

> We hear Enlightened Men fear only Heaven's Decree.
>
> An Emperor accepts with humility Heaven's opportunity.
>
> As We are aware, the Glorious Spirits of our Ancestors look kindly upon this command, which We dare not oppose nor evade.
>
> As We are aware, the destiny of succession reverts to us; it cannot be arrested, We therefore assume the burden.
>
> Former Emperors and Kings, fleeing in defeat, have not been provided with this means to obtain All-Below-the-Sky.
>
> Under the Chieh Hu the five cardinal virtues of man are tangled in disorder; the Pillars of the Capital have lost their protection; Heaven does not yet turn aside disaster; innumerable misfortunes still persist.
>
> The Enlightened Emperor for a long time past has occupied

the Great Seat with reluctance, has thought of transmitting the succession to Our inadequate person. When soldiers first rose up, when the first command came from Above (Su Tsung refers to the incident at Ma Wei when his father told him to accede to the request of the people and remain behind), We felt lacking in virtue, We dared not reverently succeed to the post.

Now you, Our civil and military servants, Our noble Officials, are unanimous in your declaration that in filial piety there is nothing greater than the virtue of carrying on the silken thread of succession; that in meritorious service nothing exceeds the resurrection of a dynasty.

We will therefore assemble soldiers in Shuo Fang, the Dark Northern Regions.

Firstly, the opposing rebels must be exterminated; great effort must be exerted in this the most important matter, which is the root of filial piety; and a necessity if the hearts of the countless millions are to be set at rest, and if the requests of Our many officials are to be reverently granted.

Accordingly in the Seventh Moon, on Chia Tzŭ, the day when a new cycle of days begins, We will ascend the Imperial seat at Ling Wu, and assume with the respect worthy of worship the Title of Honour.

The High and Honourable, the Enlightened Emperor shall be styled Above Ruler in the universe controlled by Shang Ti.

Select a day to inform Shang Ti by Decree that Our virtue is thin; that we take the seat appropriated to Imperial use in error.

In order to exhibit Our acceptance of the rites of Heaven, We should extend universally in the country its Mercy. There shall be therefore a great remission of punishment in All-Below-the-Sky.

K'ai Yüan, Opening of Origins, shall be styled Chih Tê, Virtue drops as a Bird to Earth.

The *nien hao* being changed to Chih Tê, many promotions were made in the official ranks.

These momentous events had taken place six days before Hsüan Tsung had actually reached Ch'êng Tu, and envoys bearing the news took a full month on the

road between the two 'Travelling Palaces,' one Farthest North, the other Farthest West.

On the first day of the Eighth Moon Hsüan Tsung issued a self-condemnatory edict which I will not quote in full. The five principal clauses were:

1. A statement that his own virtue was 'thin and poor.'
2. A regret that the country entrusted to his rule was in trouble.
3. An acceptance of blame for appointing false officials.
4. A reiteration of his instructions to the Heir Apparent.
5. A declaration of general amnesty to prisoners.

The envoys from the North bearing the *ts'ê* or record of events which had there taken place, arrived on the tenth day. Who can know what passed through the mind of the Bright Emperor? He spent four days in agonizing indecision; then on the fourteenth day of the Moon he signified his acceptance of the situation by using the title Shang Huang, Above Emperor, which his son had bestowed upon him; and on the sixteenth, the day after full moon, sitting by his window, with his own hand wrote fatherly words of advice to that same son, and promised that when peace was restored he would return to the Capital as Shang Huang.

It is impossible to recount, in this Year Record, the steps by which Imperial authority was gradually restored, largely through the ability of *Kuo Tzŭ-i, B.D. 1075, and *Li Kuang-pi, B.D. 1162, the saviours of the dynasty, to whose aid came also the T'u Fan and the Hui Ho or Uighurs.

The difficulties confronting the new Emperor, whose title in history is Su Tsung, were immense, and he, although a person of charm and intellect, was not of

forceful character, and was far too apt to respond enthusiastically to advice from all quarters.

Money, for one thing, was scarce, yet troops must be paid; therefore it was decided to resort to the fatal method *mai kuan*, selling official rank. Chang Liang Ti and the chief eunuch Li Fu-kuo busied themselves in affairs of state, to the great annoyance of the Ministers.

In the Tenth Moon of the year the sad disasters at Ch'ên T'ao and Ch'ing Fan, in which Fang Kuan was involved and which I have described in connection with Tu Fu's life, cast a further gloom over the Travelling Palace in the gloomy northern regions: and so the first year of the new era closed.

TU FU'S FORTY-SIXTH YEAR

Ruler: Su Tsung. *nien hao:* Chih Tê, 2nd revolution.

A.D. 757.

The Master escaped from the rebels during the Fourth Moon, looked up to the Above One at Fêng Hsiang and paid him reverence; was created Censor of the Left. He handed up a letter begging mercy for Fang Kuan; the Above One felt rage, and by decree ordered an inquiry into the conduct of the Master by three high officials. The Tsai Hsiang Chang Kao intervened, praying that the Master be excused; the inquiry was avoided. During the intercalary Eighth Moon the Master travelled to Fu Chou to see his family; during the Eleventh Moon he repaired to Ch'ang An where the Court had returned, and took up his duty as Censor.

In the First Moon of the year An Lu-shan suffered death at the hands of his son An Ch'ing-hsü, who succeeded to his father's command; nevertheless the

rebellion began to fall to pieces, and in spite of certain successes, such as the capture of Sui Yang in Honan (see life of *Chang Hsün, B.D. 63), An Ch'ing-hsü and the other rebels, such as Shih Ssŭ-ming, began to give way before the Imperial troops and their Tartar allies.

In the Second Moon Su Tsung reached Fêng Hsiang and held a Council to discuss methods for the speedy re-taking of the two Capitals. All public and private horses were commandeered. Both Li Kuang-pi and Kuo Tzŭ-i fought successfully against the rebels; T'ung Kuan, the Lofty Barrier Pass, was re-taken as well as were various districts East of the Stream in Ho Tung. (See Map: No.2.)

During the Third Moon the T'u Fan sent an envoy with overtures of amity, and a Chinese envoy was despatched to their territory in return.

For ten days heavy rains fell ceaselessly. The Emperor sought the reason in his own conduct, and issued a Decree lessening the sentence of all prisoners. The sky cleared.

In the intercalary Eighth Moon the rebels made a sudden attack on Fêng Hsiang itself, but were repulsed with great loss, so withdrew from their base at Wu Kung, and made no further attempt to come to the West.

Su Tsung gave the Hui Ho Chief the title of Yeh Hu, and placed four thousand men under the command of his Heir Apparent, who joined in the fighting. When the Yeh Hu himself came to Court, the Emperor bestowed a banquet and received him with great honour.

On Ting Hai, the Day of the Pig, the Commander-in-Chief, Kuang P'ing Wang, Prince of Widespread Peace, son of Su Tsung, advanced towards the East leading twenty times ten thousand men, and met the rebels to the North-west of Ch'ang An. Here a battle took place in which the rebels were defeated, their dead numbered

six times ten thousand, their Commander-in-Chief gave up the Capital and fled to the East.

When the news of this victory reached the Travelling Palace, the one hundred officials bowed before the Emperor, congratulating him; the self-same day a messenger was despatched across the Mountain of the Two-edged Sword to convey the news to the Above Emperor in Szechwan, and P'ei Mien was deputed to depart at once for Ch'ang An and report the recovery of the Capital at the altar for the worship of Heaven and at the Ancestral Temple of the Dynasty.

On the first day of the Tenth Moon, the Day of the Snake, Su Tsung issued a Decree which read:

> Because Capital City has just been recovered, We desire to pacify people of one hundred surnames; also to sprinkle and sweep palace pillars; to present a reception to the Above Emperor. Therefore during this Moon, Nineteenth day, We will return to Capital.

Kuang P'ing Wang pressed on to the East and inflicted a crushing defeat on the rebels at what is now Shên Chou, the centre of much twentieth-century fighting. Corpses were spread for thirty *li*, and the heads collected numbered ten times ten thousand. During the Tenth Moon, Kuang P'ing Wang entered Lo Yang, the East Capital. South of the T'ien Ching Chiao, the Bridge of Heaven's Ford, his soldiers stood on guard, the scholars, the people of the one hundred surnames who lined the road, uttered cries of joy. Over three hundred officials whom An Lu-shan had forced to serve, all dressed in the robes of criminals condemned to death, stood waiting the judgment of the Emperor in regard to their guilt. Kuang P'ing Wang soothed and comforted them.

On the nineteenth day of the Tenth Moon Su Tsung started for Ch'ang An from Fêng Hsiang, and on setting out despatched an envoy to Ch'êng Tu, begging his father to make his way to the Capital as speedily as possible. The twenty-third day saw his entry to the city amid demonstrations of joy on the part of the populace. His first duty was to visit the site where the Ancestral Temple burned by An Lu-shan had stood. This duty he fulfilled, dressed in the white robes of a mourner. On the twenty-fifth the civil and military officials who had been with the rebels appeared before him bare-headed and with bare feet; he directed that they be detained as prisoners pending an inquiry into their respective guilt.

The Yeh Hu of the Uighur tribes now returned from the East Capital on his way back to the steppes whence he had come. A feast of farewell was prepared in the Diffuse Government Hall; the Emperor created him Chung I Wang, Prince of Loyalty and Rectitude, and promised that each year the Governor of Shuo Fang, the Northern Regions, should bestow upon him twice ten thousand rolls of silk.

The Eleventh Moon rose and on the first day the Son of Heaven appeared in person in the Vermilion Love-pheasant Tower and himself addressed the people. His speech is, I regret to say, too long to quote. Su Tsung gives an account of his stewardship while Emperor, referring to his assumption of this position as a temporary measure, and concludes by saying that he is anxiously awaiting the Firebird Chariot of his father on its return from the West, when he himself may abide by the decision of his father in regard to his own future status.

Early in the Twelfth Moon, Su Tsung went to the Wang Hsien Kung, Gaze towards Virtuous Men Palace,

to meet his father. Hsüan Tsung had already arrived and was waiting in one of the high gate towers. Su Tsung saw him from afar; dismounted in haste; took a few steps backwards as etiquette demanded, and then ran forward. Below the Gate Tower he 'performed the reverence again and again, and danced with joy.' The Bright Emperor then descended from the height; his son threw himself on the ground and embraced his father's feet. Tears choked his voice, he could not speak, but himself led the old man into the chief hall and himself carried food to place before Hsüan Tsung. Such manifestation of filial piety moved the officials of the right and left to tears, and the culminating point was reached when Su Tsung, having helped his father to mount, desired to lead his horse. This Hsüan Tsung would not permit. He did, however, lead the way into the city while Su Tsung rode behind. The Bright Emperor, sighing, said:

> We have enjoyed ruling the State for a long, long time past; We did not realize its value. We see Our son as Son of Heaven; We realize its value indeed.

Su Tsung then hurried ahead to the City Gate that he might receive and 'direct in the right course' the Imperial procession, a duty performed as a rule by the servant of a high official. From inside the City Gate to the Scarlet Love-pheasant Gate at the entrance of Ta Ming Kung, Intense Brilliance Palace, a canopy of silk in five colours was stretched, flags and banners fluttered, the sky could not be seen. The people of the hundred surnames thronged the roads, rejoicing and crying:

> We could not foresee this day: we once more look upon the two Enlightened Ones!

A thousand officials, civil and military, stood waiting

to prostrate themselves and perform the reverence outside the Han Yüan Tien, Cherish Origins Hall. Hsüan Tsung stepped up to the throne and received their congratulations as the Minister of the Left brought them forward in order of precedence, and as the officials bowed before their former lord, their emotion was so great that 'there was not one but gulped down his sobs.'

The Rites ended, Hsüan Tsung proceeded to the Chang Lo Tien, Hall of Eternal Joy, where he and Yang Kuei-fei had so often spent their days together; he visited the Ancestral Temple of the Dynasty and then took up his residence in the Hsing Ch'ing Kung, Prosperous Felicity Palace, which had always been one of his favourite residences.

Su Tsung begged that he himself might again inhabit the East Residence as though he were the Heir Apparent, but Hsüan Tsung appointed Kao Li-shih to explain to his son that he was old and weary, and no longer desired to rule; and so Su Tsung's reign was sanctioned.

On the seventh day of the Twelfth Moon, the Above Emperor sat for the last time as Son of Heaven in Hsüan Chêng Tien, Diffuse Government Hall, and handed over to his son the Transmission of the State Signet, a great seal of jade, in the Chinese eyes a very potent symbol. Su Tsung wept bitterly as he received it.

The very next day, reports from both the rebels, Shih Ssŭ-ming and Kao Hsiu-yen, were received, saying that they with their armies, numbering eight times ten thousand men, would surrender to Imperial authority. This submission was accepted with alacrity – perhaps too great an alacrity: Shih Ssŭ-ming was even created Kuei I Wang, the Prince who Returns to Rectitude, and made Governor of Fan Yang. Thus, in spite of the fact that

An Ch'ing-hsü was still unconquered, as the year closed, a semblance of peace came to the distracted state.

TU FU'S FORTY-SEVENTH YEAR

Ruler: Su Tsung. *nien hao:* Ch'ien Yüan, 1st year.[1]
A.D. 758.

The Master served as Censor of the Left; in the Sixth Moon went out from the Palace doors to a post as minor official at Hua Chou. In the Twelfth Moon he asked for leave of absence and went for a time to the Eastern Capital, taking a suggested plan of campaign to Kuo Tzŭ-i.

Having performed his duties towards his dead Ancestors and his living father, Su Tsung, whose health at this time gave great cause for anxiety, turned his attention to matters connected with his immediate family. Li Yü or Kuang P'ing Wang, the Prince of Widespread Peace, was appointed Heir Apparent, and the Lady Chang, whose rank had steadily risen, was, during the Fourth Moon, created Huang Hou or Empress. This intrepid lady, so the history states, 'would not allow a single Palace woman to approach the Emperor'; her jealous and tenacious disposition prevented her from carrying out the duties of an Empress in the accepted manner, and she found an able lieutenant in the chief eunuch Li Fu-kuo: in fact, too able a lieutenant, and it was not long before she began to resent his influence over the ailing Son of Heaven, who found the affairs of state a heavy burden.

It was necessary to do everything possible to cement

[1] The *nien hao* was changed during the second Moon, the use of the word *tsai* or revolution was abandoned and that of *nien*, year, re-introduced.

the alliance with the Uighur tribes, and in the Seventh Moon the Princess Ning Kuo, aged fourteen, started for the country of the Hui Ho to become the bride of a chieftain and thus make the Uighurs relatives of the Imperial house. Fang Kuan, who in spite of his disgrace had remained in the Capital, was despatched during the Sixth Moon to take up a minor position in Pin Chou, and his friends were, at the same time, scattered to the winds.

The semblance of peace proved but a mirage. Li Kuang-pi disapproved of the honour which had been bestowed on Shih Ssŭ-ming, whom he mistrusted, and induced the Emperor to place a watch upon Ssŭ-ming, who, discovering this, was naturally furious. He promptly seized and decapitated not only the wretched official who had been placed in the position of watch-dog but two hundred other persons as well. He also demanded the head of Li Kuang-pi, and declared that if this satisfaction were not granted him, he, marching at the head of his troops, would wreak vengeance. Shih Ssŭ-ming could therefore no longer be considered the 'Prince Returned to Rectitude,' but was once more an active enemy of the Imperial house.

Meanwhile An Ch'ing-hsü had taken refuge in Yeh Ch'êng, known to-day as Chang Tê, and had shut himself into the city with his forces. Kuo Tzŭ-i and Li Kuang-pi were ordered to conduct operations against him and besieged Yeh Ch'êng. An Ch'ing-hsü called Shih Ssŭ-ming to his aid; and although Ssŭ-ming felt anything but friendly emotion towards An Ch'ing-hsü, his anger with the T'ang dynasty was so great that he immediately responded. A terrible storm had obliged Kuo Tzŭ-i to raise the siege of Yeh Ch'êng and retire on Lo Yang, so Ssŭ-ming entered the city without difficulty,

promptly put An Ch'ing-hsü to death, reproaching him with having killed his father An Lu-shan, and after installing Shih Chao-i, a son, as Governor at Yeh Ch'êng, returned himself to Fan Yang.

After the disaster at Yeh Ch'êng the Emperor had replaced Kuo Tzŭ-i by Li Kuang-pi, but as a matter of fact there was no unity of command: eight or nine 'commanders' struggled on different lines and the situation to North and South of the Stream was very serious.

TU FU'S FORTY-EIGHTH YEAR

Ruler: Su Tsung. *nien hao:* Ch'ien Yüan, 2nd year. A.D. 759.

The Master returned during the spring to his post at Hua Chou. There was famine near the Pass during the Seventh Moon. The Master retired from official life and went to Lung Yu, the Dragon Mound. (See Map, Circuit 4.)

On the fourth day of the First Moon the Son of Heaven, in accordance with the rites, tilled the ground. It was customary for him to complete one furrow: Su Tsung in his zeal ploughed nine! The Li Kuan, Officers who control the Rites, protested, saying 'It is excessive,' but Su Tsung replied:

> We are impelled to plough as an example to those below. We resent that there are not a thousand *mou* to plough to the end.

During the Second Moon there occurred an eclipse of the Moon, and because of this shadow cast on the symbol of the Empress, Su Tsung postponed bestowing upon her the felicitous 'style' which the one hundred officials had chosen for her.

On the first day of the year, Shih Ssŭ-ming, then at the

city we call Ta Ming, proclaimed himself Emperor of the Yen dynasty, and set up a rival *nien hao* as well.

On the sixth day of the Third Moon Kuo Tzŭ-i and the eight other Chieh Tu Shih or Commanders appointed by Su Tsung on the suggestion of a eunuch, who declared that divided power would keep any one man from becoming too powerful – these commanders, as I say, fought Shih Ssŭ-ming at the encampment of Hsiang Chou, near the present Chang Tê, and were put to rout. Kuo Tzŭ-i, holding his men together, retired across the Yellow River, destroying the Ho Yang bridge in his passage, and fell back on Lo Yang, the Eastern Capital, where, making a stand, he proceeded to reorganize his shattered troops. It was at this time that Tu Fu travelled along the banks of the Yellow River on his way back to Hua Chou, when he found the people in the desperate straits he describes in the poems appearing in the chapter 'Tu Fu the Minor Official,' Part III.

(*To be continued in another Volume.*)

AN LU-SHAN. B.D. 11. Died A.D. 757.

Member of a Turki tribe from the present Chao Yang Hsien in Chihli, whose mother was reputed to be a witch, and it is said that at his birth a strange light was seen surrounding the house, and the creatures in the fields made loud noises. Terrified, the authorities decided that the child be killed, but his mother succeeded in hiding him. Lu-shan grew into a tall, well-developed, clever youth, with a facility for languages and an ingratiating manner which charmed the Emperor and Yang Kuei-fei when he appeared at Court. Kuei-fei indeed called him her son and treated him with great familiarity. He was employed against the Ch'i Tan Tartars and gradually arrogated to himself immense power. Having recounted many details of his life and exploits in connection with Tu Fu's career, I will not weary my readers with repetition.

CHANG CHIU-LING. B.D. 38. A.D. 673–740.

For this biography I quote, in part, the entry in *A Biographical Dictionary*, by H. A. Giles.

'Flourished as a statesman and poet under the Emperor Ming Huang of the T'ang dynasty. Graduating high on the list of *chin shih*, his profound learning gained for him the sobriquet of "Chief in the Hall of Literary Trials," and he soon attracted the notice of Chang Yüeh, who introduced him into public life. In conjunction with Han Hsiu, he ventured to remonstrate against the licentiousness and misrule which prevailed. In A.D. 736, on the occasion of an Imperial birthday, when others presented rare and costly gifts, including mirrors obtained at great expense from distant lands, he offered only a collec-

tion of wise precepts. He sought in vain to awaken the Emperor to the treasonable designs of An Lu-shan. He himself was attacked by Li Lin-fu and was banished to Ching Chou. Later on, Ming Huang found out what a valuable counsellor he had lost, and ennobled him as Earl, not long after which he died. It is also said that when new Ministers were afterwards recommended, his Majesty invariably asked if they were anything like Chang Chiu-ling. He was very reserved in manner and punctiliously formal in all matters of ceremony. His poems are among the most brilliant even of the brilliant age in which he lived. In his youth he used to communicate with his relatives by means of carrier-pigeons, which he trained in large numbers, and which he called his "flying slaves." When his mother died, he planted a purple-flowered "shrub of longevity" by her grave, whereupon white birds came and nested in the trees around – both these being mourning colours!'

CHANG HSÜN. B.D. 63. A.D. 709–757.

An official with a distinguished military career which ended with his heroic defence of Sui Yang against An Ch'ing-hsü. Starvation faced the garrison, but he would not yield; eventually the enemy broke in, and as Hsün refused stoutly to own allegiance to Ch'ing-hsü, he was put to death. Impotent rage during the siege when caught like a rat in a trap had caused him to grind his teeth with such fury that all but three or four were ground down to the gums!

CHANG LIANG-TI.

The principal concubine of Li Hêng, who assisted her Lord in the most capable manner and who was eventually raised to the rank of Empress. As the details of her life

appear in the Year Record and elsewhere, I do not repeat them here.

CHANG YÜEH. B.D. 134. A.D. 667–730.

A great poet, a distinguished painter and an able statesman who served under the Empress Wu and her successors, and continued in office when Hsüan Tsung came to the throne. Although his career towards the end of his life was one of alternate favour and disgrace, he was, at the time of his death, a Minister of State.

CH'ÊN HSÜAN-LI.

A distinguished member of Hsüan Tsung's Guard who was of a most honest and dependable disposition. Disapproving of the Bright Emperor's intimacy with the lovely Lady Kuo Kuo, he upon occasion actually prevented the Bright Emperor, who listened to his admonition, from going to her house. He was among the small group of followers who accompanied Hsüan Tsung on his flight to the West, and was more or less responsible for the death of Yang Kuo-chung, whom he had long considered the chief danger to the state. Upon the return of the Court he was ennobled as Duke of Ts'ai, but soon died.

CHÊNG CH'IEN.

A poet and painter whom Ming Huang, admiring greatly, desired as an advisor; but the poet evidenced an irreconcilable distaste to any form of regular employment: in the crude parlance of everyday life, he was incurably lazy. The Bright Emperor, therefore, in special recognition of his talent, created a new post – the post of Kuang Wên, 'Boundless Erudition,' which kept him within hail of the Court and entitled him to a resi-

dence. This same residence proved to be anything but luxurious; being completely out of repair it leaked in a hundred places, and Chêng Ch'ien in his penniless condition could not better matters, nor could he complain to the Above Lord who had singled him out for consideration. He therefore accepted his discomfort in a philosophic spirit and consoled himself by writing poems and illustrating them himself. The Chinese include his name among the masters of 'insect, fish and imaginative paintings.' Materials being scarce, he collected fallen leaves in the courtyards of the Tzŭ En Temple, and stored them carefully in several rooms of the building itself. Day by day he fetched a supply, and when a year had passed every one bore a picture or a poem.

One of his famous offerings to the Emperor was a landscape with a poem in impeccable script, placed so that the balance of the entire composition was perfect. Ming Huang with his quick æsthetic response appreciated it keenly and exclaimed: 'Chêng Ch'ien! The Three Perfections!'

When An Lu-shan and his Mongol hordes took possession of the Capital, the painter was dragged from his leaky dwelling and with one hundred brother officials was carried to Lo Yang and there appointed to the Board of Hydrography. Declaring himself unable to serve, he feigned paralysis and meanwhile despatched a secret writing to the Emperor Su Tsung at Ling Wu, expressing his unswerving loyalty. The mere fact that he had remained alive through so humiliating an experience militated, however, against him, and after the rebellion subsided he, in company with Wang Wei and Chang T'ung, was arrested and imprisoned. Ts'ui Yüan, in whose care they were, made the most of his opportunity

and commanded the three great painters to decorate the walls of his house. In fear of death they hastily complied, and did indeed avoid paying the extreme penalty of their enforced misdeeds. Punishment, however, they could not escape. Chêng Ch'ien's sentence was that of exile to T'ai Chou, where he died a few years later.

The post of Kuang Wên, created for him, persisted until the fall of the Manchu dynasty.

CHIN SHÊNG-T'AN. B.D. 385. A.D. 1627–1662.

One of the most famous *literati* of the late Ming Dynasty days: a man of Soochow who was arrogant, eccentric and of wide learning. Editor of four famous Chinese novels known as the *Four Rare Works*, which he published with commentaries; he also studied deeply other branches of literature. A famous edition of Tu Fu's poems is edited by Shêng-T'an, who considered them among the six works of outstanding talent in Chinese literature. His name *shêng t'an* means 'enlightened men sigh,' and was given him because he was so clever that at his birth other 'enlightened men' sighed in despair. Soon after the accession of the Ch'ing dynasty he was executed with sixteen other men of letters who were suspected of treasonable tendencies.

FANG KUAN. Died A.D. 763.

A native of Honan whose father had held a high position under the Empress Wu. Kuan was of a very reserved nature and devoted himself to study. For ten years he and his friend Lü Hsiang – whose biography, B.D. 1443, I commend to my readers – lived on I Yang Shan, a mountain to the north-east of the present Sung Hsien in Honan, immersed in books. They both disapproved Ming Huang's passion for lovely ladies, which

was so great that an official called the *hua niao shih*, 'officers of birds and flowers,' spent his whole time in search of some new beauty. Lü Hsiang wrote a *fu* 'pricking' the Emperor for his self-indulgence.

During K'ai Yüan, twelfth year, Fang Kuan came to the Emperor's notice through his 'writing' on the sacrifices at T'ai Shan, and received as a reward the minor rank of Pi Shu Shêng Chiao Shu Lang, a private secretary for the revision of books. Later he served with discrimination and rectitude as District Magistrate in many places and was universally beloved.

Ten years later, K'ai Yüan twenty-second year, he became Chien Ch'a Yü Shih, a high judicial officer, but gave a mistaken judgment in regard to a crime and was degraded, acting again as District Magistrate. Wherever placed, he worked hard to eradicate evil and encourage good customs; he moreover put every official residence in good repair. His reputation grew and grew, and he held a succession of important offices.

When the tragic events of T'ien Pao, fifteenth year, forced Hsüan Tsung to undertake that 'progress' into Szechwan which so closely resembled flight, Fang Kuan hurried alone to his assistance and met the Bright Emperor, who, as the history says, 'felt great, great joy' on the road. The same day Kuan was rewarded by the appointment to high office and was given a purple brocade bag in which to keep his badge of rank. A month later he travelled to the North-west, carrying the letter in which Hsüan Tsung begged his son to ascend the throne.

Arriving before Su Tsung, Kuan, deeply moved, spoke only of state matters, his eloquence poured forth in a torrent, 'he spoke his real thoughts, with passion,

generosity and disinterested magnanimity.' His presence coincided with the arrival of various generals who had been defeated in the fighting centre; these men stood beneath a great flag, their hands bound behind their backs awaiting execution, the sentence pronounced for their ineptitude. Fang Kuan pled hotly in their defence, and Su Tsung followed the advice of a man so greatly in repute and released all but one. Among those who were thus indebted to Fang Kuan for life itself was *Wang Ssŭ-li, who later rendered great service. Kuan was fully convinced of his own ability and imposed his opinion on the Emperor, scorning to consult with Kuo Tzŭ-i, Li Kuang-pi and other generals in the field. The sad disaster to which he fell victim is described in Tu Fu's autobiography, and from that disgrace he never really recovered. The end of his life rather belied its early promise as he fell under the influence of a certain musician Tung Lan-t'ing, a great exponent of the *ch'in*, who misused this influence and gained wealth by acting as Fang Kuan's 'screen' and only allowing those who paid for the privilege to approach him.

In the Eighth Moon of the first year, Kuang Tê period, A.D. 763, he was taken ill on a journey and died in a Buddhist monastery where he had sought a lodging.

HAN HSIU. B.D. 618.

The entry in *A Biographical Dictionary*, H. A. Giles, reads:

'A statesman who joined Chang Chiu-ling in his remonstrances addressed to the Emperor Ming Huang of the T'ang dynasty. His Majesty is said to have lost flesh in consequence; but when his courtiers suggested that the

Ministers were to blame, he replied: "Though I may be thin, the empire is fat." He was a Minister of State in 733, and died about 740, aged sixty-seven.'

HO CHIH-CHANG. B.D. 643. Born A.D. 659.

A statesman and poet under Hsüan Tsung, who was quick to recognize talent and who introduced Li T'ai-po to the Court. He was a master of calligraphy and of a most jovial disposition. Tu Fu refers in the poem 'The Eight Immortals of the Wine Cup' to a well-known incident in Chih-chang's career when the poet fell from his horse and landed at the bottom of a well which was fortunately dry, and was found there snoring peacefully. Extremely eccentric, he called himself 'the Mad Sojourner of Ssŭ Ming' – his ancestral district, and Hsüan Tsung called him Ho Kuei or Ho the Dæmon.

KAO HSIEN-CHIH. B.D. 952. Died A.D. 755.

A Korean in the service of the Emperor Hsüan Tsung, who as related in the Year Record distinguished himself greatly in military expeditions against the Central Asian tribes. One account declares that, had the eunuch Inspector not been afraid, Hsien-chih would have penetrated even further than he did; other accounts accuse him of cupidity and disloyalty, but the fact remains that he was the instrument by which Chinese suzerainty was greatly extended.

During the An Lu-shan rebellion he succeeded in holding the T'ung Pass, and then proceeded to the defence of T'ai Yüan Fu. This city he could not hold, and before surrendering to the enemy he distributed the grain in the granaries to his soldiers and burnt what they could not carry away – a very wise move; an enemy, however, one of the eunuch Inspectors, accused Hsien-

chih of robbing, and in spite of murmurs among the troops he was forthwith put to death. It is not surprising that the glory of the T'ang dynasty was dimmed when the 'foxes,' as eunuchs are called, arrogated to themselves such unlimited power.

KAO LI-SHIH. B.D. 956. A.D. 683–762.

The faithful chief eunuch of Hsüan Tsung, who had been devoted to the interests of his master from the days when the Bright Emperor was still, as Heir Apparent, victim of intrigue on the part of his aunt, the intrepid Lady T'ai P'ing, Princess of Great Peace.

Li-shih, who is said to have been six feet six inches in height, was a man of determination, foresight and discretion, and did his best to prevent many of the follies the Bright Emperor committed. In 748 he was appointed 'Generalissimo of the Frontiers.' When the An Lu-shan rebellion broke out he fled with the Imperial party, and history states that he himself tied the noose when the lovely Yang Kuei-fei was hanged. He then accompanied the Bright Emperor to Szechwan.

The end of his life was sad. After both Hsüan Tsung and Su Tsung had died, Li Fu-kuo, chief eunuch of the day, contrived that Li-shih be banished from the Court; eventually he returned, having been pardoned, but when he read the dying statements of Hsüan Tsung and Su Tsung, the two masters he had served, his grief was so great that, turning respectfully to the North, as though facing the throne, Li-shih vomited blood and died. His tragic claim to fame lies in the fact that he was the first eunuch under the T'ang dynasty to arrogate to himself presumptuous power, and his example was followed all too faithfully.

KAO SHIH (Styles Ta-fu, Man of Penetration, and Chung-fu, Man who is the Second Brother). B.D. 960.

A life-long friend of Tu Fu, who passed his early youth in poverty and, as one account says, in following an actress of whom he was enamoured from place to place, writing operatic pieces for the company to which she belonged. The *T'ang Ts'ai Tzŭ Chüan* says that he 'did not grasp detail, and, ashamed to prepare for the usual examinations, hid himself among the devotees of gambling houses.' His talents and fame nevertheless became known and he was appointed a Wei official in Fêng Ch'iu. Certain events in his life, such as his meeting with Tu Fu and Li T'ai-po in Honan, and his departure for the North-west in Ko-shu Han's employ, are related by Tu Fu.

This biography will be continued in another Volume.

KO-SHU HAN. B.D. 980.

The generous and open-handed son of a rich Tartar: the *T'ang Shu* says that if he saw a person who looked needy Han immediately sent him money. He was quick-tempered and of *yang*, that is of a frank, impulsive nature. As to his failings, he loved to gamble and drink hard.

When he was forty his father died and Han came to Ch'ang An, where after three years he realized his ambition by becoming a military official under the military governor West of the Stream. Later he served under Wang Chung-ssŭ, who gave him a minor rank.

Proving himself a capable leader, his power grew, and disorder among the T'u Fan on the frontier gave him an opportunity of which he made the most. At K'u Pa Hai three companies of T'u Fan dashed down a hill in broken

order; Han, grasping a short spear, met and engaged them, scattering them right and left. His method of fighting, as described by the history, was very fierce. Attended by a few followers who rode on either hand, Han would pursue his enemy, and instead of sticking a cavalryman in the back, would bring his short spear down on the man's shoulder, and when the man turned, Han thrust the spear-head into his throat, tossed him up three or five feet and unhorsed him; whereupon one of Han's followers, armed with a large knife, decapitated the wretched T'u Fan.

In the autumn of T'ien Pao, sixth year, the Emperor, then at the hot springs on Li Shan, heard criticism of Wang Chung-ssŭ and sent for Han to ask his opinion in the matter. Han, the tears rolling down his cheeks, defended his patron with such warmth that instead of having his rank reduced, Chung-ssŭ was promoted, and Han was appointed to his office as Chieh Tu of Lung Yu. (See Map: No. 4.) His exploits on the frontier and his tragic end at Ling Pao have been described in the Year Record and in connection with Tu Fu's life. Although a man of no education he enjoyed reading the Spring and Autumn annals and appreciated learned men. Kao Shih served as his secretary.

KUO TZŬ-I. B.D. 1075.

One of the most famous generals in Chinese history and the saviour of the T'ang dynasty. As his major exploits took place subsequent to the year A.D. 759, with which this volume closes, I reserve his biography for another Volume.

LI FU-KUO. B.D. 1126. Died A.D. 762.

The little son of a stableman, who was early made a eunuch and became serving-boy to Kao Li-shih. His

face was ugly, but his personality was strong and he gained ascendancy over Li Hêng, Chung Wang, while he was still Heir Apparent, and upon the return of the Court to the Capital after the disasters of the An Lu-shan rebellion, he rose to great power and was ennobled as a Duke. (*To be continued in another Volume.*)

LI HÊNG. B.D. 1216. A.D. 711–762.

Third son of Li Lung-chi, then Heir Apparent, who became later Ming Huang, the Bright Emperor, and of the Lady Yang, a P'in or concubine of high rank.

At this time – the second year of Ching Yün or Auspicious Clouds – there were two strong parties in the Palace. One group was devoted to the Heir Apparent while the other followed the Princess T'ai P'ing, who exercised great power over her brother the Emperor Jui Tsung, and who hated with a lively hatred her nephew the 'Eastern Palace'; in other words the Heir Apparent. Members of her party spied upon the young man, and in the words of the history 'reported every matter, be it but as small as a sesamum seed.'

Lung-chi indulged in no illusion regarding his aunt's feelings; therefore when his beloved, Lady Yang, proved to be pregnant, his 'heart felt no peace,' he knew her to be in danger from the Princess T'ai P'ing's party. Perplexed and anxious he sought Chang Yüeh and asked his advice, saying:

> Those who wield power do not desire that I have many descendants; I fear that disaster may overtake the lady. What shall be done?

Chang Yüeh advised swift and desperate measures, advised, in fact, that abortion be immediately brought about, and himself provided Lung-chi with a potent drug

for the purpose. Concealing it upon his person, the Heir Apparent hurried to a retired room and proceeded to prepare the draught which was to secure immunity from danger for the Lady Yang. As he carefully stirred the mixture fumes, heavy fumes rose; he fell back as if overcome with wine, sank in a stupor and dreamt that a spirit rose before him and with a swift movement swept away the medicine bowl. He awoke, however, to find the bowl in place and therefore recommenced his labours – with precisely the same result. Three times this happened, and then Lung-chi hastened to inform Chang Yüeh. The older man listened attentively, pondered and said quietly:

> It is the command of Heaven. Do not fear.

The child thus fated to be born became forty-five years later the Emperor Su Tsung.

The third year of Auspicious Clouds dawned, but the period name was changed before the First Moon had waned; it was changed again during the Fifth Moon, and once again during the Eighth Moon when Hsien T'ien, the period which saw Tu Fu's birth, was ushered in. Hsien T'ien lasted sixteen Moons and then Li Lung-chi, coming to the throne, altered the year name to K'ai Yüan, Opening of Origins, the period which during its early years at least was one of the most peaceful and prosperous in Chinese history.

The little boy whose birth had thus been decreed by supernatural beings proved to be 'intelligent, ready, witty,' and to have a remarkable memory; 'what his ears once heard and his eyes once saw was not again lost or forgotten,' and his exquisite literary compositions were full of historical allusions. The sad, childless Empress

Wang loved him as her own son and carefully superintended his upbringing until, in the twelfth year of K'ai Yüan, she died of grief following deposition from rank.

During the fifteenth year the young man, now seventeen years of age, was created Chung Wang, Prince Loyalty, and his personal name was altered to Chün, Deep Waters.

In the eighteenth year of K'ai Yüan came opportunity to prove his executive ability: the young Prince was directed to accompany the Commander-in-Chief upon an expedition against Mongol invaders to the East. The One Hundred Officials, full of curiosity on this occasion when Chung Wang made his first public appearance, assembled to bid him farewell at the Kuang Shun Mên, Gate of Light and Glory, and of all the brilliant gathering there was probably none more interested in the bearing of the youth than was Chang Yüeh who, it may be said, had presided over his birth. The older man performed the ritual of farewell and then said triumphantly:

> I have often seen the true portrait of T'ai Tsung the Great; Chung Wang in energy, manner, deportment and appearance is of the selfsame order as his Enlightened Ancestor. This is the good fortune of the Spirits of Land and Grain, the Tutelary Divinities of the State.

Thus, with blessings on his head, Chung Wang started out.

Seven years revolved and he was appointed the Greatest Son or Heir Apparent, his name being changed to Shao, Maintain; when, however, the near officials pointed out that this name had been used for an Heir Apparent in one of the ephemeral Six Dynasties, it was altered again to Hêng, Successful or Prosperous, which name he retained to the end of his life.

The appointment as Heir to the Throne brought scant happiness to the young man. Li Lin-fu, because he was annoyed that his advice in regard to the matter had not been followed, and Yang Kuo-chung, because the Prince was far too clear-sighted and upright to remain his dupe, both objected, and hoping to discover something to his discredit, surrounded him with spies from whom he lived in continual danger of his life.

In the thirteenth year of T'ien Pao, Heaven's Treasure, during the first month of spring, An Lu-shan was received at Court. The Heir Apparent

> presented a secret report to the Throne saying Lu-shan has the physiognomy of a rebel,

but the Bright Emperor would not listen. Did he remember his son's words when less than two years later Lu-shan rebelled and led his soldiers to the very steps of the Imperial Palace?

The details concerning the rebellion and the part Chung Wang then played have been given in the Year Record and in the text accompanying Tu Fu's life; I will not repeat them here.

On the seventh day of the Twelfth Moon, Chih Tê second year, being A.D. 757, as we have seen, Chung Wang was confirmed in his appointment as Son of Heaven, and I shall from now on speak of him by his Imperial title, Su Tsung.

Among his many sons three stand out, the Wang or Princes Kuang P'ing, who later became the Emperor Tai Tsung, Yüeh and Chien Ning; the third, Chien Ning Wang, was very clever, his perspicacity and courage were quite above the average; he was moreover loyal and outspoken, so outspoken indeed that he dared criticize to

the Emperor the conduct of Chang Liang-ti, whom he described as 'headstrong,' and Li Fu-kuo who, so he declared, was becoming far too intimate with both inner and outer officials. This happened while the Court was still in the North before the return to Ch'ang An. From this moment the lady and the eunuch united in their effort to rid the Court of so outspoken an individual. They succeeded in poisoning Su Tsung's mind, and he condemned his son to death. The sentence was carried out, but the Son of Heaven suffered grief and bitter remorse for the remainder of his troubled life. Kuang P'ing Wang, who dearly loved his brother, mourned daily, and fear of Chang Liang-ti grew in his heart. After the return to Ch'ang An, Kuang P'ing was created Heir Apparent, and the Lady Chang, who was then made Empress, regarded him with fear and suspicion, dreading that on his accession to power he would avenge the death of Chien Ning Wang.

Is it surprising that with all these currents of hate, suspicion and revenge playing about him, the affectionate, weak-willed Su Tsung fell ill? (*To be continued in another Volume.*)

LI KUANG-PI. B.D. 1162. Died A.D. 763.

The descendant of a Ch'i Tan chief who had submitted to the Empress Wu Hou, Kuang-pi distinguished himself in border warfare and co-operated with Kuo Tzŭ-i in putting down the An Lu-shan rebellion. He then fought successfully against Shih Ssŭ-ming, was created a Prince and died at the height of his fame.

LI LIN-FU. B.D. 1170. Died A.D. 752.

A high official under Hsüan Tsung to whom may be ascribed, more than to any other one person, the unfor-

tunate lapses from the path of rectitude which characterized the latter part of the Bright Emperor's reign; which lapses culminated in the An Lu-shan rebellion. Lin-fu could claim connection with the Imperial Clan, their common surname being 'Li'; he was a person of great charm and a skilful musician. Early in the K'ai Yüan period his brother-in-law, who held a high position at Court, arranged that Lin-fu should serve near the Heir Apparent Ying Wang, Prince Lustre of Gems. As soon as Lin-fu 'entered the door,' he thought over ways to make influential friends and in especial became intimate with the eunuchs. By K'ai Yüan, fourteenth year, he had risen to the post of Yü Shih Chung Ch'êng before the Emperor.

At this time the Emperor, because he doted on the lady Wu Hui and was therefore partial to her sons Shou Wang and Shêng Wang, became estranged from the Heir Apparent and his two own brothers, Yao Wang and Chü Wang. Lin-fu, seeing how matters stood, informed Wu Hui-fei, through the eunuchs, that in case of difficulties he would protect her sons from the results of possible jealousies; naturally the chief concubine did all she could to further Lin-fu's interests.

Now one of the chief Ministers of the day was P'ei Kuang-t'ing, and his wife, an exceedingly astute but equally unscrupulous lady, was the daughter of the notorious Wu San-ssŭ, B.D. 2343, whose biography I commend to my readers, though, not being relevant to my theme, I do not quote it here. The Lady P'ei did her utmost to assist her husband in collecting money by all means fair or foul, and her scruples did not prevent a secret liaison between herself and Lin-fu.

Kao Li-shih was at this time rising to power, and often came to see the Lady P'ei, whom he knew well, having

begun life in the service of her father, and when P'ei Kuang-t'ing died, his wife summoned Li-shih and suggested that Lin-fu should be recommended as Kuang-t'ing's successor. This Li-shih dared not do, but he kept the affair in mind, only waiting for an opportunity to assist his friends.

The Emperor asked advice, in regard to the vacant post, of a certain Hsiao Sung, one of his secretaries; Sung recommended *Han Hsiu, B.D. 618, an able man who was indeed appointed. Li-shih was in attendance, and when he heard that Sung was to indite an Imperial command summoning Han Hsiu to appear before the Presence, hurried to Lady P'ei and reported the matter. She immediately despatched Lin-fu to offer his assistance to the innocent Han Hsiu, who firmly believed that the appointment which he subsequently received came through this channel. His real sponsor, Hsiao Sung, whom Hsiu did not care for, was completely lost sight of, and Hsiu did everything possible to benefit Lin-fu, recommending him as Minister, a recommendation which Wu Hui-fei heartily endorsed, saying that she 'had early heard of Lin-fu's ability.' This happened in the twenty-third year of K'ai Yüan, A.D. 735.

I have told the story of Lin-fu's rise at such length as it casts a white light on the ways then entered upon, and makes the subsequent collapse of the dynasty comprehensible.

Lin-fu now suggested to Wu Hui-fei, through the eunuchs, that the Heir Apparent meant harm to her and her sons. Hui-fei, frightened, wept before the Bright Emperor, and he, who never could withstand a woman's tears, declared in his fury that Prince Lustre of Gems and his brothers should be banished from the Court and

should take their places among the people of the one hundred surnames. He then discussed the matter with *Chang Chiu-ling, upon whom he still relied greatly. Chiu-ling was most emphatic; declared that in looking back from dynasty to dynasty, it was clearly proven that if the Heir Apparent, one of the props of the State, were ever removed, disaster followed. He cited several instances to prove his point, the Imperial rage subsided, better counsels prevailed, and, for the time at least, the three youths were safe. But Lin-fu, although helpless, felt rage and hate in his heart.

It was not long, however, before the wise Chang Chiu-ling was banished, and his successor was the specious Li Lin-fu. Once again the wind of rumour wafted sinister suggestions to the Imperial ear: the three Princes meant harm to Wu Hui and her sons – they would possibly usurp the throne itself! The Bright Emperor was more incensed than ever and sent for Lin-fu to discuss the matter with him. Now Lin-fu was very astute, far too astute to commit himself in any way, he simply remarked that this was an affair concerning the household of the Above One and that the Above One must decide upon his own course. The Emperor, to his shame be it said, sent the three sons out to become members of the one hundred surnames.

The wretched youths left the Palace bewildered and despairing, made their way to the Post House beyond the East Gate and there sat in a state of piteous indecision; a state that was speedily terminated by Imperial henchmen who arrived with a command from the Son of Heaven that all three should be put to death. The sequel of this tragic event I have recounted in the Biographical Note relating to Wu Hui-fei.

After Hui-fei had died, Hsüan Tsung discussed the matter of appointing an Heir Apparent with Li Lin-fu, who by this time had been made Duke of the Chin State, and Lin-fu remarked that Shou Wang, son of Wu Hui-fei, was already a man and that to create him Heir Apparent would be 'very correct.' The Bright Emperor replied, saying:

> *Li Hêng, Chung Wang, is filled with benevolence and filial piety, his years are greater than those of Shou Wang, *he* should be Heir Apparent.

From this moment Li Lin-fu lost no opportunity of injuring the unfortunate Li Hêng.

Baleful as was Lin-fu's influence at Court, the most harmful thing that he did in regard to the dynasty was to induce Hsüan Tsung to entrust the defences of the frontier to a great extent to the local tribes. The histories advance, as a reason for this action, the theory that Lin-fu dreaded an undermining of his own position as Minister by some victorious general who might exemplify the common saying: *ch'u chiang ju hsiang*, 'go out a General, return a Minister.' The result was well-nigh fatal to the Imperial family, and uprisings occurred on all sides.

So many details in connection with Lin-fu's preposterous arrogation of power have been given in the body of this book, that my readers shall be spared repetition; suffice it to say that when the Old Man of Heaven approached his end he lived in hourly fear of assassination, even his own servants did not know night by night in which room he intended to sleep. Jealous of power, he resented any sign of Imperial favour towards others. Yang Kuo-chung was his especial abhorrence and he

welcomed Kuo-chung's appointment to Szechwan, but felt rage that the Emperor on parting wrote a farewell poem saying that he would count on his fingers the days until Kuo-chung returned to take up the post of Minister.

In the Tenth Moon of T'ien Pao, eleventh year, Lin-fu was already ill, nevertheless he accompanied Hsüan Tsung to the hot springs on Li Shan. The illness increased; he called a sorceress in consultation; she said that could Lin-fu but *see* the Bright Emperor he would be cured. The Bright Emperor, affectionate and impulsive as always, wished to hurry to Lin-fu's bedside and was restrained with difficulty. A compromise was however reached, Lin-fu was laid in the courtyard of his house, the Emperor ascended the Hsiang Shêng Ko, Pavilion whence Enlightened Men Descend from Heaven, and Lin-fu's eyes could rest on the master he loved with all the affection of which he was capable. Hsüan Tsung waved a red silk handkerchief; Lin-fu made a futile effort to rise and perform the reverence, but was obliged to depute this duty to another.

The next day Yang Kuo-chung returned from Szechwan and hastened to the bedside of Lin-fu, who nominally still held power; Lin-fu, when he saw him, realized that Kuo-chung was the man who in a vision some years earlier had insisted upon sharing his seat; now, begging Kuo-chung to undertake the direction of affairs, he died.

Every honour was heaped upon the dead Minister, who was given a magnificent burial, but the very next year Kuo-chung induced An Lu-shan to memorialize the Emperor to the effect that Lin-fu had been planning a traitorous uprising. Forgetting the twenty years of service to Lin-fu's credit, Hsüan Tsung ordered that his coffin be opened, his body stripped of the gorgeous

burial robes and the pearls, which until this day are placed between the lips of the dead; ordered, too, that Lin-fu's sons be banished and his family scattered. At long last the Old Man of Heaven lay in a dishonoured grave.

LI LUNG-CHI. B.D. 1172. A.D. 685–762.

The sixth Emperor of the T'ang dynasty, whose Imperial title is Hsüan Tsung, often referred to as Ming Huang, the Bright Emperor. A most energetic young man, who brought order from the chaos resulting from the usurpation of power by the two Empresses Wu and Wei, and in 710 placed his father on the throne, succeeding to this same throne on the abdication of his father two years later and inaugurating what promised to be a glorious reign. Economy was the watchword of the day; he forbade the Palace ladies to wear silks and jewels, and actually had large quantities of precious articles burned before the Palace Gates; he introduced the use of paper models instead of actual articles in the offerings to the dead, a custom still followed; he cultivated learning in all its branches and was a liberal patron of the arts; he founded too the famous institution known as the Pear-blossom Garden and the Park of Spring Harmony, where musicians were trained to perform airs which have been sung until the present day; and he inaugurated the Han Lin Academy, which survived until 1905, when the ancient system of education was abolished.

In disposition Hsüan Tsung was extremely affectionate; his relations with his brothers, whom he used to meet in the Flower and Calyx Tower of the Prosperous Felicity Palace, were most harmonious, and his love for successive Palace ladies was intense; he suffered indeed from the defects of his qualities.

Unfortunately the early years of his reign are not relevant to my theme, and my readers will have learned all too many of the details connected with his dotage, details upon which I need not, here, enlarge.

LI PI. B.D. 1180. A.D. 722–789.

A native of Ch'ang An, an exceedingly clever little boy who was brought before Hüsan Tsung at the age of seven when he could already compose verses; the Emperor, charmed, exclaimed, 'This boy's brains are too big for his body.' Men like Chang Chiu-ling and Ho Chih-chang made much of him, calling him their 'little friend.' He became a Han Lin and was very intimate with Li Hêng, Prince Chung, the Heir Apparent, but was banished from the Court as the result of a lampoon on Yang Kuo-chung; however, when Li Hêng became the Emperor Su Tsung, he returned and continued his close relationship with the Emperor although he declined to hold office. This annoyed Li Fu-kuo, and Pi was obliged to seek safety in a retirement which did not last long, as Su Tsung recalled him to his post of unofficial counsellor. (*To be continued in another Volume.*)

LI PO (style T'ai-po, the Great Whiteness, a name for the planet we call Venus). B.D. 1181. A.D. 705–762.

The most popular of all Chinese poets and a life-long friend of Tu Fu, who was about a decade younger than he. So much has been written about Li Po in European languages that I will not weary my readers with repetition, but will refer those who are interested to the pamphlet on Li Po by Arthur Waley, published by the China Society, London; to the volume in English devoted to Li Po's life and works by Shigeyoshi Obata, and my own volume, *Fir-Flower Tablets*, in which about a

hundred and fifty of his poems and a sketch of his life will be found.

LI YÜ. B.D. 1235. A.D. 727–779.

The second son of Li Hêng, who succeeded his father as the Eighth Emperor of the T'ang dynasty. During the period dealt with in this volume he is known as Kuang P'ing Wang the Heir Apparent; his biography will appear in another Volume.

LI YUNG. B.D. 1242. A.D. 678–747.

The official who took notice of Tu Fu when he had become Governor of Po Hai in Shantung, and who is therefore referred to as Li Po-hai. His literary talents were great, and his style in written inscriptions, epitaphs and so on was greatly admired; but his official career was chequered and he finally fell foul of Li Lin-fu, was thrown into prison and died.

P'U-KU HUAI-ÊN. B.D. 1665.

A member of the T'ieh Lo, one of the numerous Uighur tribes, who distinguished himself by his military talent and aided Kuo Tzŭ-i in his campaign against An Lu-shan. (*To be continued in another Volume.*)

SHIH SSŬ-MING. B.D. 1728.

A fierce, deceitful member of a Turki tribe, who received a command from Hsüan Tsung and who co-operated with An Lu-shan, whose fellow-countryman he was, against the Ch'i Tan. After the An Lu-shan rebellion he appeared to be loyal, but secret thoughts of rebellion stirred in his mind, and in 759 he threw off allegiance to the T'ang dynasty, killed An Ch'ing-hsü, and proclaimed himself Emperor of the Yen dynasty. (*To be continued in another Volume.*)

SUNG CHING. B.D. 1830. A.D. 662–737.

An official of great reputation during the early years of Hsüan Tsung's reign. He was exceedingly stern – 'his bowels were iron, his heart a stone,' yet transparently just, his influence being most salutary.

TS'ÊN TS'AN. B.D. 2017.

A great writer who was the devoted friend of Li T'ai-po and Tu Fu, and was especially intimate with the latter. Tu Fu recommended him to the Emperor Su Tsung, a move which ended in Ts'ên Ts'an's being appointed a Censor, serving at the same time as did Tu Fu. Ts'an's official career was fairly distinguished, but his fame rests chiefly on his writings, both essays and poems being highly prized by the Chinese.

TU FU.

A Biographical and Bibliographical Note on Tu Fu and his works will appear in another Volume.

WANG SSŬ-LI.

According to the *Jên Ming Tzŭ Tien*, a Korean of great military ability who followed Ko-shu Han. During the An Lu-shan rebellion he urged Han to memorialize the Emperor, begging that Yang Kuo-chung be executed, but Han did not do so. When T'ung Kuan fell, Ssŭ-li made his way on foot to join Su Tsung, and was one of the defeated generals for whose life Fang Kuan successfully pleaded. His later battles were more fortunate; he retook Lo Yang, the East Capital, had various other victories to his credit, and became chief of the Board of War. Later he was ennobled as a Duke.

WANG WEI. B.D. 2241. A.D. 701–762.

Famous as a painter, a poet and a high official, he desired to follow Hsüan Tsung in his flight to the West, but was seized by An Lu-shan's men and carried as prisoner to Lo Yang. Forced by the rebel to hold office, he, in order to make himself as useless as possible, took a drug which paralysed his vocal cords. He managed to convey a poem expressing his despair to the Emperor, who after the Restoration pardoned him for not having committed suicide. Many interesting details are known of his life, but as Tu Fu does not seem to have been especially intimate with him and the story of his life is therefore irrelevant to my theme, I will not recount them here.

WU HUI-FEI. Died A.D. 737.

After the death of Lady Yang, mother of Li Hêng, Wu Hui became the favourite *fei* or concubine of the first rank in the harem of Hsüan Tsung. Her two sons were Shou Wang, Prince Longevity, in whose harem the lady known later as Yang Kuei-fei made her debut, and Shêng Wang, Prince Abundance. Because of his passion for Wu Hui, the Bright Emperor loved these sons and became estranged from the Heir Apparent Ying Wang, Prince Lustre of Gems, who was Hsüan Tsung's second son, the child of another lady. Prince Ying and his two brothers, Yao Wang and Chü Wang, the Emperor's fifth and eighth sons, suffered a cruel fate (see Li Lin-fu's Life), and their spirits, which according to history returned after death, so terrified Hui-fei that she died. The account states that in the cold winter of K'ai Yüan, twenty-fifth year, Hui-fei, sitting alone and idle in her room to the North of the Palace, suddenly saw the spirits

of the three murdered brothers rise before her. Crazed with terror she fell unconscious; was roused, saw them still hovering near. A sorceress and her companions were called, and although they performed posturing dances with great energy they failed to exorcise the spirits, and Wu Hui-fei died.

WU TAO-TZŬ. B.D. 2349.

Imperial artist-in-chief and one of the most famous artists of China. His countrymen describe him as Enlightened Draughtsman of One Hundred Generations. His style was original, his subjects varied. The temple frescoes which he executed during the reign of Hsüan Tsung are referred to with enthusiasm by contemporary poets, but have long since been destroyed.

YANG CHAO (called Kuo-chung, Loyal to the State). B.D. 2396.

A native of P'u Chou, Shansi, who had no learning, no rectitude and no standard of behaviour; was skilled in drinking wine and devoted to gambling. Being most unpopular with the members of his Clan, he left home and wandered to the barracks in Szechwan, where he joined the army, and as he assiduously curried favour, rose step by step until he filled an office of low rank in the constabulary.

When his cousin, the lovely Yang Yü-huan (his grandfather and hers were elder brother and younger brother), became the pampered favourite of the Emperor Hsüan Tsung, the Chieh Tu Shih of Chien Nan (see Map: No. 7), realizing the potential power of this individual who filled so low a rank, appointed him as secretary and helped him to rise to a minor position before the Throne.

Circumstance, energy and nepotism combined to

assist Kuo-chung on his upward path; and by T'ien Pao, tenth revolution, he had become Chieh Tu Shih of Szechwan.

A higher position still awaited him. Li Lin-fu died and Kuo-chung, returning from Szechwan in the very nick of time, succeeded him as Minister of the Right and carried on the lax habits which Lin-fu had inaugurated. Instead of holding audience at five in the morning, Lin-fu had suggested, on his first accession to power, that it be held at three. Towards the end of his life, however, he told the Emperor that as the Empire was at peace, and there were no very important matters to be settled, state business could very well be carried out by officials at their own homes, where Ministers could sign necessary documents.

This method of procedure suited Kuo-chung and his cousins 'the five households of Yang' to perfection, and Kuo-chung's *chia ti* became the heart of Ch'ang An. Here he called together the scholars who, having passed their examinations, offered themselves for various positions. The ladies Han Kuo, Kuo Kuo and Ch'in Kuo watched the proceedings from behind skilfully arranged blinds, and when they witnessed the novel spectacle of learned men, old and young, each with his different eccentricity – some nervously tapping their feet, others nodding their heads, still others conning words under their breath – the ladies could no longer contain themselves and peals of derisive laughter rang through the hall. Now derision is a thing no son of Han has ever been able to endure; the scholars were exceedingly annoyed, but dared not betray their feelings.

The pale and lovely Kuo Kuo possessed an irresistible fascination for men, nor was she afflicted by any puri-

tanical inhibition; her intimacy with Kuo-chung was one of the scandals of Ch'ang An. Their houses were side by side with doors leading through; as the history says: 'they met by day and by night, they recognized no propriety nor any bounds to their behaviour.' Sometimes, their horses' heads touching, they rode to Court, and striking their beasts, caused them to prance and curvet. People by the roadside were horrified – 'not one but feared that propriety was being outraged.'

License reached to the Palace pillars: against all rules the Son of Heaven came out from his residence and visited the 'five households'; sat with them and partook of food; chatted, laughed and treated all five alike; and when, to escape the winter cold, he proceeded to Hua Ch'ing Kung, Glory of Purity Palace, at the hot springs near Lin Tung, it was the flag of the Chieh Tu of Chien Nan which proudly headed the procession.

Of Kuo-chung's subsequent life, of the jealousy which grew up between him and An Lu-shan, of his intolerable interference with Ko-shu Han, and of his terrible death, I have spoken in the Year Record.

YANG YÜ-HUAN (later known as Yang Kuei-fei). B.D. 2394.

Daughter of the President of the Board of War under the Emperor Jui Tsung. Entered the harem of Prince Shou, Longevity, eighteenth son of Hsüan Tsung, A.D. 735; three years later she passed into the Imperial harem, having spent a short time in a Taoist nunnery to regularize the transfer; while there she was called T'a Chên.

Her person was majestic; she could sing beautifully and perform the posturing dance with spirit; her ear for

music was very acute; she was shrewd and extremely perspicacious. In fact, she was an outstanding personality. Her history has, however, been so often told in the various European languages, and so much of her story found its place in the autobiography of Tu Fu, that I will cut short this entry. Suffice it to say that when she was hanged in the Sainted Figures Hall of the Post House at Ma Wei she was but thirty-eight years old.

YAO CH'UNG. B.D. 2431. A.D. 650–721.

An official who served with great distinction in the early part of Hsüan Tsung's reign. He was so just in his execution of duties that it is said that upon one occasion, when he was leaving a post, the people, weeping, clung to his horse's neck, cut off his stirrups and took away his whip, imploring that he remain.

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Glossary

Above One, often mentioned: a term for the Emperor whose name is never spoken.

Auspicious Breath, p. 220: this is supposed to rise from the ground; when sites for tombs are chosen, infinite care is taken to find a spot where there shall be an abundance of this breath or 'vital essence,' which is searched for by geomancers.

Bill-Hook of Wu, p. 183; an allusion to a story connected with the State of Wu in the third century B.C. Kan Chiang, B.D. 934, a sword-maker, cast two swords of the bill-hook variety, mixing the metal with the blood of his own sons. He presented these swords to the Prince; then, standing before his liege, called 'I am here.' The swords rose, flew towards him and rested on his breast.

'Call back the soul,' p. 210: strips of paper are tied to a stick and waved, to 'call back the soul' of a person who has fainted or who has just died.

Chan Yü, p. 122: the Chinese term for the Turki title which we transliterate as 'Khan.'

chêng, p. 162: a harpsichord having twelve brass strings; played with a plectrum.

Chiang Tsung of the Liang dynasty, p. 261: a man who left the Empire during a rebellion but who was able to return at the age of thirty, his hair still black – Tu Fu is not so fortunate.

ch'i lin, often mentioned : one of the four spiritually endowed creatures, the others being the *fêng huang*, the tortoise and the dragon; *ch'i lin* is a composite term in general use; *ch'i* denotes the male of the species, *lin* the female; it is said to attain the age of one thousand

years and to be the noblest form of animal creation. The Ch'i Lin Pavilion contained portraits of military heroes.

Ch'ü Chiang, often mentioned: the Crooked or Zigzag River lying to South-East of the Capital in the Fu Jung or Hibiscus Gardens; see sketch map of Ch'ang An country, No. 11.

Ch'ü Yüan and Sung Yü, p. 164: Ch'ü Yüan lived B.C. 332–295 and is still the type of a loyal and patriotic minister; he was also a great poet, as was his nephew Sung Yü.

chüeh ming, p. 174: a plant which, according to Bretschneider, grows in marshes. The seeds are gathered on the tenth day of the Tenth Moon and are dried in the sun for one hundred days. It has yellow flowers which bloom in the Seventh Moon.

Ch'ün Ti, p. 35: a spirit which rules the Eastern Quarter.

Chung Nan Shan, p. 169, etc.: the Central Southern Hills is another name for the Tsinling Mountains stretching South of Ch'ang An.

Dragon or *lung*, often mentioned: one of the four fabulous animals (see *ch'i lin*); it controls the elements and is the symbol of the Emperor, whose attributes and possessions are qualified by the word, as the 'dragon countenance,' the 'dragon robe,' 'dragon love,' etc.

Dragon's Gate, p. 134: carp which successfully 'run' the falls at a gorge called Lung Mên or Dragon's Gate in Honan are supposed to become dragons; they have become the symbol for successful scholars, and the Gate of the Examination Hall is often called the 'Dragon's Gate.'

Eight Extremities, p. 41: meaning 'everywhere' – the Four Quarters and the intermediate points.

Eight Immortals of the Wine-Cup, p. 83: celebrated wine-bibbers of the T'ang dynasty whose names may be found in Giles' *Biographical Dictionary*. Ho Chih-chang, a minister of state, B.D. 643; Li Chin, Prince of Ju-yang, B.D. 1111; Li Shih-chih, an Imperial Clansman, B.D. 1195; Ts'ui Tsung-chih, a noble, B.D. 2048; Su Chin, a very famous scholar, B.D. 1774; Li T'ai-po, a famous poet, B.D. 1181; Chang Hsü, the calligraphist, B.D. 59; Chiao Sui, who stammered badly until his tongue was loosened by wine, B.D. 350.

fêng huang, often mentioned: one of the four spiritually endowed creatures (see *ch'i lin*); *fêng huang* is a composite term in general use: *fêng* denotes the male of the species, *huang* the female; its prototype is the golden pheasant, and the bird is the symbol of affection. I therefore often translate the term as 'love-pheasant.'

Four Great River Systems, p. 215: The Yellow River and three other streams of Northern China.

fu: a poetic form which is irregular and which so closely resembles prose that some authorities contend that it should not be classified with poetry.

Fu Jung or Hibiscus Pleasure Grounds, p. 298: this park was built by Ming Huang during the K'ai Yüan period and connected with the Hsing Ch'ing Kung, or Prosperous Felicity Palace; at this time he began to neglect public affairs and did not come out. Many Palace women, who burnt incense in preparation for the Emperor's arrival, lived in Fu Jung.

Glory of the Well, p. 244: the first water drawn from a well as dawn breaks is so described and is supposed to be very good for the skin.

Gold Coin Meeting, p. 298: during the K'ai Yüan period Ming Huang instituted these festivals for

members of the Imperial Clan and officials above the Fifth Grade. Gold coins, which the guests kept as souvenirs, were then scattered to right and left.

Golden Register, p. 69: a register of scholars kept during the Han dynasty; here referred to figuratively.

Green Lake, p. 102: the Ch'ing Hai or Kokonor, a salt inland sea of brilliant colour; see map.

Hsi Wang Mu, p. 151: the Western Empress Mother is a fabulous being who is supposed to reign in the Western Paradise.

hsing: a 'running verse,' very free in form; the language used often approaches colloquial speech.

I, Prince (pronounced *ee*), p. 35: Prince I, or Hou I, is supposed to have lived B.C. 2436 and to have been possessed of miraculous powers. His prowess with bow and arrow was such that upon one occasion he delivered the moon from an eclipse by shooting the threatening shadow, and upon another occasion he pierced nine false suns which were causing mischief to the crops, and the orbs crashed to earth.

ko: a song, which may be sung or not but which is irregular in form.

k'o t'ou: the ceremony generally referred to as 'kotow'; the individual prostrates himself before the Emperor and knocks his head upon the ground nine times.

ku shih: ancient poems irregular in form.

K'un Jung, p. 239: the Jung tribe who inhabited K'un in the West.

K'ung T'ung, often mentioned: a peak in the West among the Min Hills; see map of Shênsi, etc.

li, often mentioned: a Chinese measure of distance which approximates to about one-third of a mile.

Li T'ai-po, portrait of, reproduced by kind permission

of Mr. Perceval Yetts from his edition of the *Wan Hsiao T'ang*, a collection of portraits of famous men and women, published A.D. 1743 by Shang Kuan-chou, a scholar, poet and artist, also known as Shang Chu-chuang, the Taoist of the Bamboo Hamlet, who was then in his seventy-ninth year. Picture on page 152 from same source.

Lone Man, p. 263: a term for the Emperor.

Love-pheasant, often mentioned: see *fêng huang*.

lü shih: poems according to law, written upon a definite rhyme and tone pattern; see Introduction to *Fir-Flower Tablets*.

Moth eyebrows, p. 169: the eyebrows most admired in China are likened to the curved antennæ of moths and are called 'moth eyebrows.'

Names: at birth a little boy was given a *ju ming* or 'milk name,' as well as a *p'u ming* or 'generation name' given to each male of the same generation; later his teacher gave him a *hsüeh ming* or 'school name,' which the family also used; this was followed by the *k'ao ming*, 'examination name,' chosen by the teacher or by the youth himself and often changed, especially after a failure to pass an examination, such failure being taken as an indication that the name was useless. Upon his appointment to a post the grown man chose a *kuan ming* or 'official name' and also a *tzŭ* or 'designation' which was an allusion to the 'official name'; this was followed by a *hao* or 'style' which was a description of the 'official name,' and a *pieh hao* or 'separate style' being an allusion to this description. For instance, Mr. Nung Chu's *kuan ming* is *chu*, 'bamboo'; his *tzŭ* is *p'ei an*, 'that which protects the straw hut'; his *hao* is *ching sun*, 'strong and unbending,' while his *pieh*

hao is 'pure of heart' – the bamboo, being hollow, suggests to the Chinese, thought which has no trace of deceit.

nien hao, the style of a reign or the name by which its years are called. In the Han and later dynasties the Emperors often changed the styles during their reigns, especially if untoward events suggested that the name in use might be unlucky. This usage was dropped during the Ming dynasty.

Nine Celestial Spheres, Ninth Heaven, etc., often mentioned: the nine celestial stages or orbits into which, according to popular belief, the Heavens are divided.

Nine Springs, often mentioned: a term for the streams supposed to flow in the region where the soul wanders after death.

Pear-Blossom Garden and Park of Spring Harmony, p. 33: famous Imperial schools instituted by Ming Huang where singing and dancing were taught.

Pei T'ing, p. 327: another term for the present-day Sinkiang, or Chinese Turkestan.

Prolonged Mercy Casket, p. 132: a receptacle where officials deposited communications which they hoped to bring to the notice of the Emperor.

Pronunciation: no one European language provides all the sounds needed for Chinese transliteration. A few general principles should be kept in mind: *a* is long, as in *ah* – the syllable *ang* does not rhyme with *hang* but with *aahng*; *ai* is *eye*; *ê* as the *e* in *clergy*; *i* as the *i* in *believe*; *u* as *choose*; *ü* as the French *u* in *utile*. Of the consonant sounds five are especially difficult to reproduce in English: *chih* like *chi* of *chirrup*; *shih*, first three letters of *chivalry*; *ssŭ*, the *zz* of *buzz*; *tzŭ*, put a *t* before the *zz* of *buzz*; *tz'ŭ*, as *tzŭ* with an aspirate

after the *tz*. (For further details, *see* table in Sir Walter Hillier's Pocket Dictionary.)

Rice-in-husk foot-rule, p. 115: a figurative term for the tiny brass nails which mark niches on a Chinese foot-rule.

Sainted Figures Teaching, p. 104: i.e. Buddhism.

Saliva Pool, the T'ai I Chih, name of a pool in the inner Palace. Its name is connected with Taoist symbolism: the 'saliva' of the Yin and Yang – that is, the Negative and Positive, or Female and Male Principles – are supposed to unite in such quantity as to make a pool.

Sea-bird, p. 134: a picture of this bird (the *i* pronounced *ee*), which is supposed not to fear the wind, is painted on ships as a protection against shipwreck. Tu Fu hoped that, like the bird, he would avoid being overwhelmed by circumstances.

Sea-turtle or *yüan*, p. 66: a creature said to measure twenty feet round.

shêng, p. 151: a very ancient instrument consisting of thirteen dissimilar reeds inserted in a gourd bulb with a bent blow-tube; the music is made by inhaling the air through the reeds.

Six Units, the, p. 184: these are the four points of the compass, the zenith and the nadir.

Sixth Grade, horse of, p. 315: the official in charge of Government horses branded them in six ways: firstly, he placed the character *kuan*, official, on the off shoulder; secondly, the year name on the off flank; thirdly, near the tail, the name of the division to which it belonged (this was omitted if the horse was fit for Imperial use); fourthly, after the test given when the horse reached the age of two, if it qualified for such distinction the character *fei*, 'to fly,' was branded on

the near fore-foot and hind-foot; fifthly, rather light but well-bred horses had the picture of a dragon stamped on the near side of their necks; and sixthly, horses fit for Imperial use had three flowers branded near the tail.

Spirit-screen, p. 212: as evil spirits are supposed to travel in a straight line only, it is customary to place a flat screen either inside or outside entrance doors.

Tu Chüeh: the history of the Tu Chüeh or Western Turki, whose territory extended to the North of the Heaven High Mountains, may be divided into two more or less equal parts; from the middle of the sixth to the middle of the seventh centuries they were independent; from the middle of the seventh to the middle of the eighth centuries they were under the successive domination of the Chinese, the Tibetans, the Arabs and various other tribes; they were never indeed a highly centralized group, but were rather a loose federation of tribes, each semi-autonomous. Their political organization was weak, and this accounts, perhaps, for their lack of accomplishment. At the death of each ruler eternal arguments as to the succession broke out; under the continual leadership of a strong ruling house they might have become an invincible force; as it was, they played an important rôle, and for a century or more, exercised authority from the Altai on the East to the Volga on the West, from the Tarbagatai on the North to the Indus on the South; and as a result of this authority, which brought about a certain measure of peace, commercial relations between China, Byzantium, India and Persia were maintained; moreover, the religion and political ideas of the different people were exchanged. Indeed the

period of their existence is one of the most important in the history of Asia.

tz'ŭ bamboos, p. 63: a dwarf variety which grows in Szechwan; called the bamboo of 'maternal affection' because it grows in a thick clump and the shoots which spring to the South are 'protected' by the mother stalks.

tz'ŭ: a lyric in which line length varies, but which must keep in all stanzas the line length adopted.

Wadded garment, p. 106: picture of a Palace woman of the K'ai Yüan period. When the soldiers were fighting on the Northern borders, the palace women made wadded garments for the men. One of these ladies tucked a poem describing the lonely useless life she led in the 'inner apartments,' and put it in the pocket of the wadded garment she was making. The soldier who found it showed it to his officer and eventually it came back to the Palace. The Bright Emperor, much moved, arranged that the lady marry the fighting man.

Water lizard or *t'o*, p. 66: a creature about ten feet long found in South China; its gruff voice heard at night indicates rain.

Weaving Maiden and Oxherd, p. 150: there are many popular variants of the story accounting for the separation of these lovers who are now supposed to be stars in Aquila and Lyra (see *Myths and Legends of China*, by E. T. C. Werner) on either side of the Silver River. On the seventh of the Seventh Moon they are allowed to meet, and all the magpies in the universe are supposed then to assemble and make a bridge enabling them to cross the stream.

Whale, the Great, p. 191: a leviathan supposed to inhabit the Cold Sea. See Note 50, *Fir-Flower Tablets.*

Wine of Worthy Men, pp. 57, 84: a thick white wine from fermented grain; clear wine is called that of Enlightened Men.

World of Shade, p. 216: this world, where light shines, is known as the *yang* world; below it stretches another world, the *yin*, its counterpart in every particular except that there no light shines.

Index

A Liao Ta, 359
Above Emperor, Above Ruler: *see* Hsüan Tsung
Ai, Madam, Mr. Nung's name for the author, 11, 36, 158
Allusions explained, 16, 65, 96, 98, 117, 136, 145, 152, 219, 220, 226, 236, 258, 278, 285, 288, 302, 313, 326
Altai Mountains, 369
An Ch'ing-hsü, 237, 326, 389, 390, 395, 396
An Hsi, 359, 368
An Lu-shan, 144, 152; military successes, 181, 182, 255; proclaims himself Emperor, 199, 223, 377; turns rebel, 202, 203, 204; enters Lo Yang, 377; enters Ch'ang An, 219, 378, 384; imprisons Tu Fu, 222; defeated by Ch'i Tan, 365, 372, 373, 374; rivalry with Kuo-chung, 375, 376; murder of, 237, 389; *see* Biographical Index
An Ting, 362
Ancestor Worship, 230, 231, 283, 289, 391, 392–5
Aral Sea, 27

Baikal, 369
Balkash, Lake, 359
Bilga Khan, 362, 364
Binominals, 15
Book of Rites, 118
Books, burning of, 218
Borrowing in China, 173
Bright Emperor, the, *see* Hsüan Tsung
British Museum, the, 265
Buddhism, 59, 97, 103, 104, 241–5, 358, 359

Calligraphy, 37
Census taken, 362, 364, 367, 375
Central Asia, 117, 310, 351; Chinese relations with, 359; decline of Chinese influence in, 368–71; rout of Chinese, 374
Ceylon, 359
Chang Ching-shun, 155–7
Chang Chiu-ling, 365–6; *see* Biographical Index
Chang Hao, 256–7
Chang Hsiao-sung, 359
Chang Hsü, 34, 83, 84
Chang Hsün, 390; *see* Biographical Index
Chang Liang-ti, power of, 258, 382–4; flight with Emperor, 379; created Huang Hou, 294, 395; *see* Biographical Index
Chang T'ao-kuan, 144
Chang Tê, *see* Yeh Ch'êng
Chang Yüeh, 361; *see* Biographical Index
Ch'ang An, Eternal Peace, now Sian, Western Peace; Tu Fu's failure at, 46; horse-breeding country, 100; situation of, 355–6; hot springs near, 188; Yang Clan in, 138–40; Embassy from Nan Chao, 367; flight of Emperor from, 211, 378; taken by rebels, 384; rebels defeated, 390; re-taken, 280–4, 392
Ch'ang An Chih, 355
Chao, *see* Shansi

Chao Fei-yen, Flying Swallow, 146, 151
Characters: grass, 34, 35; large, 36
Chêkiang, formerly Yüeh, 42, 43, 99, 115, 185, 238
Ch'ên Hsüan-li, 278, 279, 378–81; *see* Biographical Index
Ch'ên T'ao, 227, 236, 254, 257, 389
Chêng Ch'ien, the Kuang Wên, 81, 82, 158–60, 164–6, 170, 246, 284, 302, 328; *see* Biographical Index
Chêng Ch'ien-yao, 81, 82, 246, 299
Chêng Ti of Han, 151
Ch'êng Tu, 20, 381, 387, 392
Chi Hsien Yüan, Garden where Talents are Perched, 130, 132-4
Chi Mên, the Thistle Gate, 181, 183
Chi Nan, *see* Tsinan
Chi Tzŭ, Thoroughbred Horse, 233, 234, 253, 343
Ch'i, *see* Shantung
ch'i lin, 105, 296, 318, 319
Ch'i Lin Pavilion, 117, 120
Ch'i Tan, 182, 184, 363–5, 373
Chia Ch'ang, 154
Chiang Ning, *see* Nanking
Ch'iang Tsun, 218, 261, 265–8
Chieh Shih, 67, 162
Chin Shêng-t'an, 269; *see* Biographical Index
Ch'in, 82, 95, 102, 105, 147, 239, 272, 280
Ch'in Kuo, the Lady, 138, 378-81
Ch'in Ling, 352, 354, 355
Chinese Mirror, The, 14, 52, 231
Ching, 105, 175, 189, 194, 270, 357
Ch'ing Fan, 227, 228, 236, 254, 389
Ch'ing Hai, Lake Kokonor, Green Lake, 102, 362, 365
Chiu T'ang Shu, Old T'ang History, Origin of Tu Fu, 23; Yang Clan, 143; death of Ko-shu Han, 283; Flight of Emperor, 379
Ch'iu Tzŭ, 368, 371
Ch'u, 53, 185
Ch'ü Chiang, Crooked or Zigzag River, 113, 177, 223, 224, 294–8
Ch'ü Yüan, 45, 164
Chung Nan, 95, 172, 196, 310
Chung Wang, Prince Loyalty: *see* Su Tsung as Heir Apparent; *see* Biographical Index Li Hêng
Circuits or Tao, 364
Clan, the, 117, 118
Cock-fighting, 154
Commercial Map of China, Philip's, 17
Confucius, 51, 138, 166, 264, 367
Conscription, 100, 117, 119–22, 181
Court Life and Ceremony, 115, 116, 287, 288, 291, 292, 317–9
Crooked River, *see* Ch'ü Chiang
Cultivator-of-Bamboos, Mr., *see* Nung Chu, Mr.

Dragon Chariot, 151
Dragon Mound, 310
Dragon's Gate, 50
Drinking in China, 42, 43

Eastern Capital, *see* Lo Yang
Examination Halls, 49

Fan Yang, 240, 326, 376, 377

Fang Kuan, 174, 226, 227, 238, 254, 255, 260, 308, 328, 361, 370, 389, 396; *see* Biographical Index
Farrar, Reginald, 353–6
Fêng Hsien, *see* P'u Ch'êng
Fêng Hsiang, 237–9, 247, 250, 258, 262, 270, 280, 307, 356
fêng huang, 36, 105
Fêng Wu-fang, 151, 152
Ferment, Prince, *see* Ju-yang
Fir-Flower Tablets, 9, 11, 12, 51, 72, 99, 119, 146, 153, 181, 229, 306, 330
Flowery Central State or Kingdom, 27, 260, 351, 353–4
Flowery Mountain, *see* Hua Shan
Forbidden City, 182, 292
Four Seas, 27, 175, 258, 381
Four Streams, Province of, *see* Szechwan
Friendship in China, 114, 115
Fu Chou, Fu Hsien, 208, 218, 253, 261, 282, 356, 357
Fu Sang (Japan), 42, 43

Geomancy, 16
Giles, Professor H. A., 17, 74
Golden Register, 69
Great River, *see* Yangtze
Great Stream, *see* Yellow River
Great Wall, 237
Great West Road, 310, 329
Green Lake, *see* Ch'ing Hai

Han, 101, 111, 145, 149, 153, 171, 278, 279, 300
Han Hsiu, *see* Biographical Index
Han Kan, 153
Han Kuo, the Lady, 138, 141, 143, 378–80
Han Lin Yüan, 366–7
Hangchow, 158
Hei Shui Ho, 362
Hêng, Mount, 277
Herd-boy and Weaving Maiden, 65, 150
Hindu Kush, 371
Ho Chih-chang, *see* Biographical Index
Ho Hsi, 178, 179
Ho Lo Fêng, King of Nan Chao, 373, 376
Honan, Province, 33, 50, 68, 310, 323, 324, 352, 353
Horses, Imperial, 154, 155
Hosie, Sir Alexander, 17, 18
Hsi, 182, 184, 228, 363
Hsi Jung, 382
Hsi Wang Mu, 142, 151, 155
Hsia, dynasty, 278, 279
Hsiang Chou, 331, 398
Hsiang Yang, 23, 321
Hsien Yang, City of Assembled Brilliance, 78, 85, 86, 227, 312, 379
Hsien-yü Chung-t'ung, 137, 373
hsing, 12, 33, 86, 100, 114, 115, 146, 155, 158, 171, 187, 208
Hsüan, King, 278, 279
Hsüan Chêng Tien, Diffuse Government Hall, 287, 392, 394
Hsüan Chuang, 103
Hsüan Tsung, Emperor, also Li Lung-chi, Ming Huang, the Bright Emperor, Shang Huang, Above Emperor; *see* Biographical Index, Li Lung-chi; 81, 82, 104, 105, 150, 178, 188, 278; rule of, 28, 29, 87, 88, 97, 99, 100, 174, 358, 370, 377; Three Great Rites, 129, 130, 134; Yang Clan and Court life, 138, 153, 187, 223–5, 375, 376;

fighting cocks of, 154; horses of, 154–6; decline of, 181, 182; flight of, 211–13, 218, 219, 377–81; in Szechwan, 236, 258, 283, 284, 381, 391; self-condemnatory edict, 388; abdication of, 386, 387, 392–4
Hsüan Yüan Huang Ti, *see* Lao Tzŭ
Hu Barbarians, 77, 121, 203, 211, 220, 226, 227, 236, 278, 307, 311, 332, 372, 374, 381
Hua Ch'ing Kung, Palace of Glorious Purity, 143, 144, 188, 370
Hua Chou, 307–10, 313, 320, 329, 340, 357
Hua Liu, Glorious Red Horse, 155, 157, 315
Hua Mên, 219, 222, 282, 311, 313
Hua Shan, Flowery Mountain, Peak of the West, 178, 202, 207, 308, 352
Huai Jên Khan, 369
Huang Hou, Empress, *see* Chang Liang-ti
Hui Ho, *see* Uighur

Ideographs, 10, 13, 16, 27, 38
Illustrations, 19
Immortals, 66, 68, 142, 151, 297
Imperial Edicts, 49, 88, 133, 370

Jade Armlet, *see* Yang Yü-huan
Jade Gate or Pass, *see* Yü Mên
Japan, 36, 42, 43, 153
Ju-yang, Prince of, Li Chin, Prince Ferment, 82, 83, 129
Judicial System in China, 123
Jui Tsung, Emperor, Li Tan, 358

Kai Fêng, formerly Liang, 62, 68, 69
Kansu, 124, 310, 351, 352, 357
Kao Hsien-chih, 99, 368, 371, 372, 374, 377; *see* Biographical Index
Kao Hsiu-yen, 237, 238, 394
Kao Li-shih, 140, 141, 145, 258, 370, 378, 381, 382; *see* Biographical Index
Kao Shih, 68, 70, 76, 103, 123, 124, 125–8, 178; *see* Biographical Index
Kao Tsu, Emperor, 96, 220
Kao Tsung, 27
Karashar, 368
Karlgren, Bernhard, 15
Kashghar, 362, 368, 372
Khotan, 368
Kiangsu, formerly Wu, 34, 43, 63, 64, 99, 181, 185, 203, 238, 355
Kiukiang, 229
ko, 12, 155
Ko Lo Fêng, 371
Ko Lo Lu, the Karlouks, 369, 374
Kokonor, Lake, *see* Ch'ing Hai
Ko-shu Han, campaigns of, 117, 124, 203, 204, 207, 220, 332, 333, 371, 372, 377, 381; respect for letters, 122, 123; created Chieh Tu Shih, 371; capture and death of, 378; *see* Biographical Index
Ku K'ai-chih, 299
Kuan Chung, 114, 115
Kuan Chung Chi, 356
Kuang, Emperor, 278, 279
Kuang P'ing Wang, Prince of Widespread Peace, *see* Li Yü, Biographical Index; 279–83, 390, 391, 395

Kuang Wên, *see* Chêng Ch'ien
Kuei Tê, formerly Sung; 68, 69
K'un Lun, 207, 351
K'un Ming, 149, 150
Kung Hsien, 23, 44, 46
Kung-sun, 33, 34, 35, 83
K'ung the Sage, K'ung Clan, *see* Confucius
K'ung T'ung, 125, 127, 194, 207, 236
Kuo Kuo, the Lady, 138, 141, 142, 144, 378–81
Kuo Tzŭ-i, 257, 280, 281, 310, 320, 326, 388–91, 396, 397, 398; *see* Biographical Index

Lao Chün, *see* Lao Tzŭ
Lao Tzŭ, 96–8, 129, 356
Lhasa, 354
Li, House of, 96–8
Li Chih-fang, 71, 72
Li Chin, Prince, *see* Ju-yang
Li Fu-kuo, 258, 389, 395; *see* Biographical Index
Li Hêng, *see* Biographical Index, *see* Su Tsung
Li Kuang-pi, 388, 390, 396–97; *see* Biographical Index
Li Lin-fu, Old Man of Heaven; examinations, 87, 134, 370; power of, 88, 109, 133, 366–8, 371, 372; became Yu Shih Chung Ch'êng, 361; Chin Kuo Kung, 366; death of, 136, 375; *see* Biographical Index
Li Lung-chi, *see* Biographical Index, *see* Hsüan Tsung
Li Mi, 376
Li Pi, *see* Biographical Index
Li Po, *see* Biographical Index, *see* Li T'ai-po
Li Po-hai, *see* Li Yung
Li Shan, 154, 187, 192, 370
Li Shih-min, *see* T'ai Tsung
Li Ssŭ-yeh, 281, 310, 326
Li T'ai-po; friendship with Tu Fu, 68–70, 72, 74–6, 328; poems by, 73–4, 76; Immortal of the Wine Cup, 84; banishment from Court, 146; *see* Li Po, Biographical Index
Li Tsun, 383
Li Yü, *see* Biographical Index, *see* Kuang P'ing Wang
Li Yüan, Prince of Yung, 377
Li Yung, Li Po-hai, 68, 70, 71, 93, 173; *see* Biographical Index
Liao Sea, 185, 326, 328
Licent, Rev. Père, 353
Lin T'ung, Hot Springs of, 187, 188
Ling Wu, 213, 218, 238, 240, 257, 357, 385, 386
Lingering Autumn, Gate of, 219, 220, 379
Lo River, 214, 352
Lo Yang, Eastern Capital, 44, 61, 62, 69, 150, 203–7, 277, 320, 323–4, 377, 391
Lo Yu Yüan, Joy of Travellers' Plain, 111, 112
Loess country, 189, 353–7
Lofty Barrier, *see* T'ung Kuan
Lowell, Miss Amy, 9, 10, 11
Lu Mên, 234
lü shih, 12
Lu Tzŭ Kuan, the Reed Pass, 237–40
Lun Yü, 51
Lung Kuan, Pass of the Dragon Mound, 356

Ma Wei P'o, 379–82
Man Tzŭ, 367, 374

Mao Yen-shou, 152, 153
Maps, 17
Marriage in China, 333, 334
Master, the, *see* Tu Fu
Mei Pei, 171
Mêng Yün-ch'ing, 323
Min Mountain, 213
Ming Huang, *see* Hsüan Tsung, *see* Biographical Index, Li Lung-chi
Mongol Tribes, 208, 218, 257, 357, 363
Mongolia, 351, 352, 363
Moscow, 354
Mu Wang or King, 65, 155
Mutilation, 118

Names, personal, 18; *see* Glossary
Names, place, spelling of, 17, 18
Names, year, 24; *see* Glossary, *nien hao*
Nan Chao, 367, 371, 376
Nan Yang, 249
Nanking, formerly Chiang Ning, 299
Nepotism, 145
New Year, 85, 109, 110
Nieh Li, 364, 365
nien hao, Ch'ing Yün, 358; T'ai Chi, 358; Yen Ho, 358; Hsien T'ien, 358; K'ai Yüan, 358; T'ien Pao, 368; Chih Tê, 377; Ch'ien Yüan, 395
Nine Celestial Spheres, 285, 286, 290, 293
Ning Kuo, Princess, 312, 313, 396
Nung Chu, Mr., Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos; inheritance of learning, 23; serving boys, 74; poverty, 107; friendship, 114; sweet chrysanthemums, 158; monastic procedure, 241; 11, 14, 21, 36, 43, 88, 89, 196, 320

Old Buddha, Manchu Empress Tz'ŭ Hsi, 149
On the Eaves of the World, by Reginald Farrar, 353–6
Ordos, the, 352, 362
Orientation, 226, 291

Pa Han Na, 359, 360, 374
Pai Shui, White Waters, 201, 204, 206, 208, 357
Pamirs, 99, 372
Pandora, 129
Pao Shu-ya, 114, 115, 200
Pao Ssŭ, 278, 279
Peak of the East, *see* T'ai Shan
Peak of the West, *see* Hua Shan
Pear Blossom Garden, 33
Pei T'ing, 326, 327
P'ei Mien, 385, 386, 391
Peking, 181, 182, 354
P'êng Lai Palace, 130, 142, 150, 151, 203, 287
P'êng Ya, 208
P'êng Yüan, 383
Persia, 359
Philip's Commercial Map of China, 17
Pi Yao, 302–5
P'i Lo Ko, 367
Pien Bridge, 382
Pin Chou, 261, 270, 396
P'ing Liang, 384
Po Lo, 155, 157
P'o Lü, 365, 370, 372
Post Office, Chinese, 17
Pronunciation, 18; *see* Glossary
P'u Ch'êng, formerly Fêng Hsien, 187–9, 196–8, 201

P'u-ku Huai-ên, 281; *see* Biographical Index

Relationships, Chinese, 108, 109, 118
Richthofen, Baron von, 353

Samarqand, 374
San Ch'uan, Three Streams, 201, 208, 213, 214, 218, 261
Sha Mo Desert, 127
Shang, Star of the East, 127, 322
Shang Huang, *see* Hsüan Tsung
Shang Lin Park, 171
Shang Shu Shêng, 45, 87, 370
Shang Ti, 387
Shansi, formerly Chao, 46, 49, 203, 237, 310, 351–4, 360
Shantung, formerly Ch'i, 49, 50, 53, 56, 68, 69, 77, 123, 355, 365, 390
Shên, Star of the West, 322
Shên Chou, 391
Shêng Jên, Enlightened Men, 97
Shênsi, 188, 189, 201, 208, 237, 309, 310, 351–6
Shih, King of, 372
Shih Chao-i, 397
Shih Ssŭ-ming, 237, 238, 326, 390, 394, 396–8; *see* Biographical Index
Shou Chiang, 362
Shou Wang, Prince Longevity, 365, 366
Shun, 93, 133, 190
Shuo Fang, Dark Northern Region, 237–9, 387, 392
Shuo Wên, 201
Sian, *see* Ch'ang An
Silver River, Milky Way, 65, 150
Sin Kiang, 326
Sirén, Dr. Osvald, 103, 355
Soochow, 43
Southern Mountain, 64, 172
Stewart, Dr., 20
Stone Gate Mountain, 53, 55, 57, 72
Stream, the, *see* Yellow River
Su the Ssŭ Yeh, 170
Su Tsung, Emperor, Li Hêng, Chung Wang, Prince Loyalty, Heir Apparent; created Chung Wang, 362; as Heir Apparent, 178, 214, 366–8, 376; flight with Hsüan Tsung, 379–81; abdication of Hsüan Tsung, 394; as Emperor, 213, 214, 377, 386, 395–8; character of, 294; campaigns of, 219, 236, 237, 283, 363, 382–6, 390–3; presentation of robes, 305; marriage of daughter, 312; appoints Tu Fu Censor, 250; Tu Fu's remonstrances, 255, 256; *see* Biographical Index, Li Hêng
Su Tuan, 229, 230, 246, 247
Su Yüan-ming, 50
Sui Yang, 390
Sumatra, 359
Sung Ching, *see* Biographical Index
Synonym compounds, 15
Szechwan, 137, 213, 236, 238, 258, 283, 374, 376, 378

Ta Chi, 278, 279
Ta Ming Kung, Intense Brilliance Palace, 286, 355, 393
Ta Mo, 369
Ta Shih, Arabs, 359, 372–4
Ta Yüan, 58
T'ai Chou, 284
T'ai Pai Shan, 227, 228, 249
T'ai Shan, Peak of the East, the Lofty Mountain, 52, 53, 361

T'ai Tsung, 27, 188, 264, 265, 279, 364
T'ai Yüan, 237, 239, 240
Talas, River, 374
T'ang dynasty, 19, 24, 27, 36, 45, 59, 96, 97, 178, 188, 264
T'ang Lu Tien, 89
T'ang Shu, T'ang History; Yang Kuo-chung, 137, 373; Yang Kuei-fei, 138, 140; An Lu-shan, 182, 237, 257; Fang Kuan, 226; Shih Ssŭ-ming, 237
T'ang Shu Hsüan Chü Chih, 45
T'ang Tsêng Yao, 366, 367
Tao Tê Ching, 97, 356
Taoism, 96–8
Teichman, Eric, 356, 357
T'êng Li, 364
Thistle Gate, *see* Chi Mên
Thoroughbred Horse, *see* Chi Tzŭ
Three Character Classic, 74
Three Great Rites, *fu* on, 46, 129, 131, 134
Three Streams, *see* San Ch'uan
Tibet, Tibetans, 354, 359
Tongking, 360
Traders, 359
Translation, Method of, 9, 10, 11, 12
Transliteration, 17, 18
Ts'ang Chou, Home of the Immortals, 297
Ts'ên Ts'an, 170, 171, 177, 178, 298, 299; *see* Biographical Index
Tsinan, formerly Chi Nan, 64, 69, 70, 72
Tso Ch'êng, 89
Ts'ui Clan, 63
Ts'ui Hsi-i, Warden of the Marches, 365
Tu, Hamlet of, *see* Tu Ch'ü
Tu Chan, 201
Tu Chüeh, 27, 362; *see* Glossary
Tu Ch'ü, Hamlet of Tu, 112, 114, 136, 158
Tu Clan, 108, 109, 136
Tu Fu; method of translation, 9–16; versification of, 12; frontispiece, 19; editions, 20; origin of, 23, 24; in Central China, 44; career of, 46, 49, 54, 77, 87, 88, 90, 92, 133, 214, 250, 285, 291, 306, 309, 318; Master, title of, 55; character and outlook of, 56, 92, 115, 119, 124, 136, 145, 146, 229, 250, 257, 291; grave pieces of, 62, 77; marriage of, 63; straw hat of, 76; passing over the year, 85, 109, 110; love for horses, 100, 155; illness of, 105–7; poetic form invented, 112; new hopes of, 129; Three Great Rites *fu*, 129–32, 134; concern for proprieties, 145, 258, 260; official life of, 178, 179, 250, 285; travelling with family, 201, 208; captivity of, 222, 223; home-sickness and love of children, 229–34; poverty of, 302, 343; historical value of poems, 235, 236; interest in military strategy, 236, 237, 240, 310, 320, 326, 329; regard for priests, 240–1, 300; remonstrance to the Emperor, 254–6; robes presented by Emperor, 305; resignation from Censorship, 306; resignation from official life, 343; *see also* events *seriatim* in Historical Year Record
Tu Hsien, father of Tu Fu, 24, 33, 51

Tu Hung-chien, 385
Tu Ling, 24, 112, 164, 189
Tu Mên Pass, 337
Tu Shih Ching Ch'üan, 20, 24, 50, 61, 68, 137, 158, 283, 320
Tu Wei, 109, 110
T'u Fan, Tibetans, 124, 181, 359–60, 362–3, 365, 367–72, 376, 380, 388, 390
T'u Lo Ho, 372
Tuan Wu, 305
Tukhāristan, 372
T'ung Kuan, Lofty Barrier Pass, 81, 201–4, 220, 272, 310, 332, 352–7, 377, 378, 382, 390
Turkestan, 354, 359
Turki Tribes, 27, 361, 363
tz'ŭ, 162
tz'ŭ bamboos, 63, 64
Tz'ŭ Yüan, 68, 356

Uighur, Hui Ho; Emperor assisted by, 219, 236, 276, 277, 388; power of, 369; alliance cemented by marriage, 312, 396; Chief created Yeh Hu, 390; Yeh Hu created Chang I Wang, 392
University Museum, Philadelphia, 265

Wade System of transliteration, 17, 18; *see* Glossary
Wang Chao-chün, 153
Wang Shih, Empress, 361
Wang Ssŭ-li, 405; *see* Biographical Index
Wang Wei, 223, 302, 314, 315; *see* Biographical Index
Weaving Maiden, the, 65, 149, 150
Wei, official rank, 41, 123, 125, 178, 179
Wei, river or waters, 95, 99, 105, 175, 189, 194, 225, 352, 354, 355, 379, 382
Wei Chi, 89–92, 133
Wei Hou, 28
Wei Mo, 299
Wei Shao-yu, 385
West Capital, *see* Ch'ang An
Western Paradise, 155
White Waters, *see* Pai Shui
World of Shade, 118, 250
Wu, *see* Kiangsu
Wu Hou, Empress, 27, 28, 61, 97, 356, 358, 382
Wu Hui-fei, 361, 365, 366; *see* Biographical Index
Wu Kung, 227, 249, 390
Wu Tao-tzŭ, 97, 98, 240; *see* Biographical Index
Wu Ti, Han Emperor, 149, 150, 151, 153, 171
Wu Yu-ju, 19

Yang, the Lady, mother of Su Tsung, 362
Yang Chao, Yang Kuo-chung; rise to power, 136–8, 143–5, 368, 373–6; methods of, 174, 204, 278, 373, 375; flight with Emperor, 378–81; *see* Biographical Index
Yang Clan, 138, 142–5, 148, 258, 365, 368, 378, 380, 381
Yang Kuei-fei, *see* Yang Yü-huan
Yang Kuo-chung, *see* Yang Chao
Yang Yü-huan, Jade Armlet, Yang Kuei-fei; influence of, 136–48, 151, 152, 371, 376; at Lin T'ung, 187; entered Imperial harem, 367; flight with Ming Huang, 211, 378–80; 104, 130, 224, 258, 278, 365; *see* Biographical Index

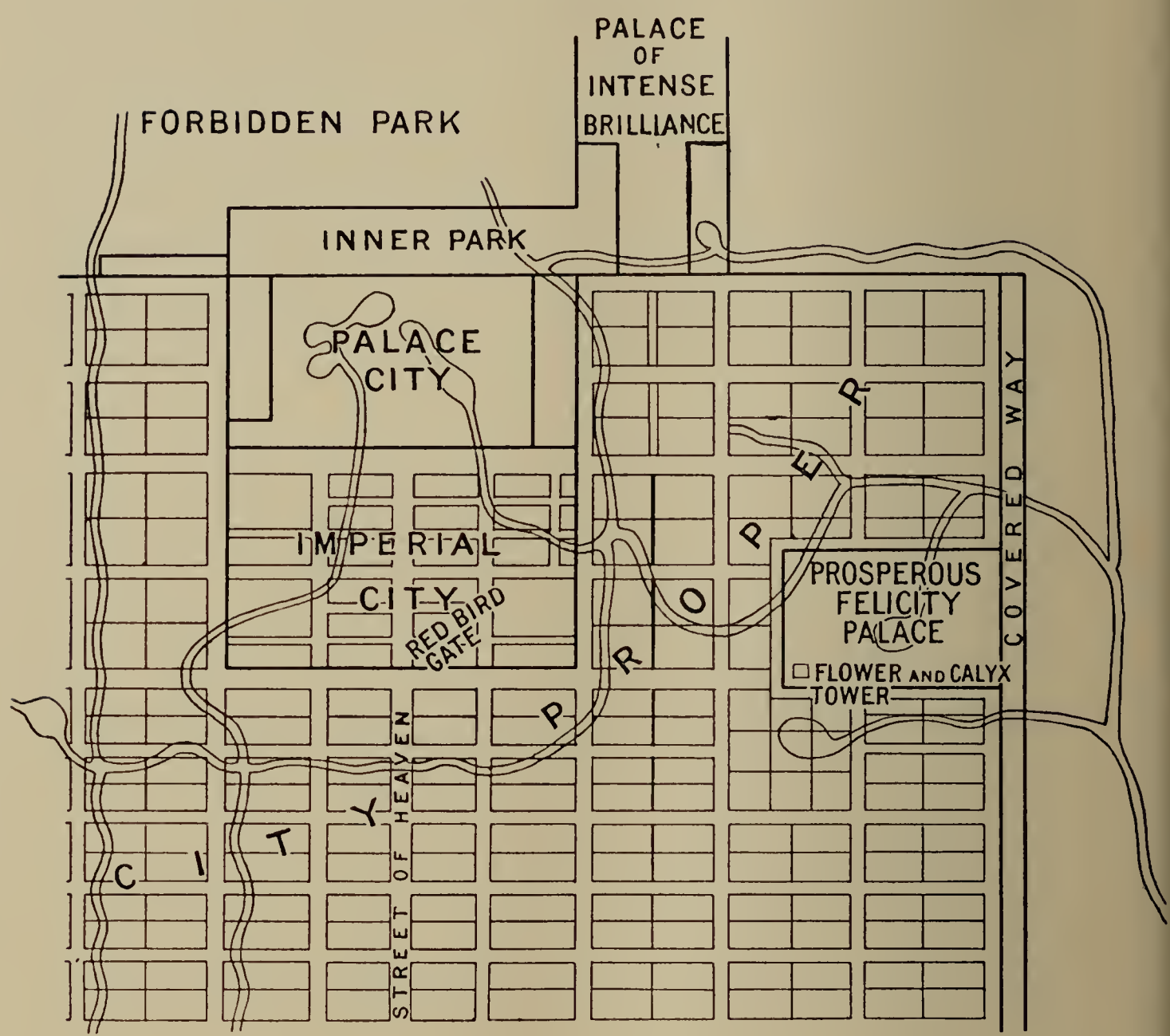
Yangtze, the Great River, 229, 355, 365
Yao, 93, 133, 190, 263
Yao Ch'ung, 359; *see* Biographical Index
Yao Niao, 155, 157
Yeh Ch'êng, now Chang Tê, 325, 326, 328, 337, 396–8
Yellow Gate, 142, 148
Yellow River, the Great Stream, 64, 66, 186, 202, 203, 213, 214, 216, 238, 310, 320, 329, 332, 341, 351–3, 362, 364, 372, 377, 384, 398
Yellow Streams, 28
Yen An, 237
Yen Chou, 51–3, 239, 240
Yen Wu, 260, 328
Yin dynasty, 278, 279
Yo Chou, 186
Yü, 236, 263
Yü Mên, 117, 124, 310, 356, 362, 368
Yü Yang, 182, 184
Yü Yu Wên, 87
Yüeh, *see* Chêkiang
Yünnan, 150, 367

Zach, Dr. Ritter von, 21
Zigzag River, *see* Ch'ü Chiang

PLANS AND

SKETCH MAP

NORTHERN HALF OF CH'ANG AN CITY.



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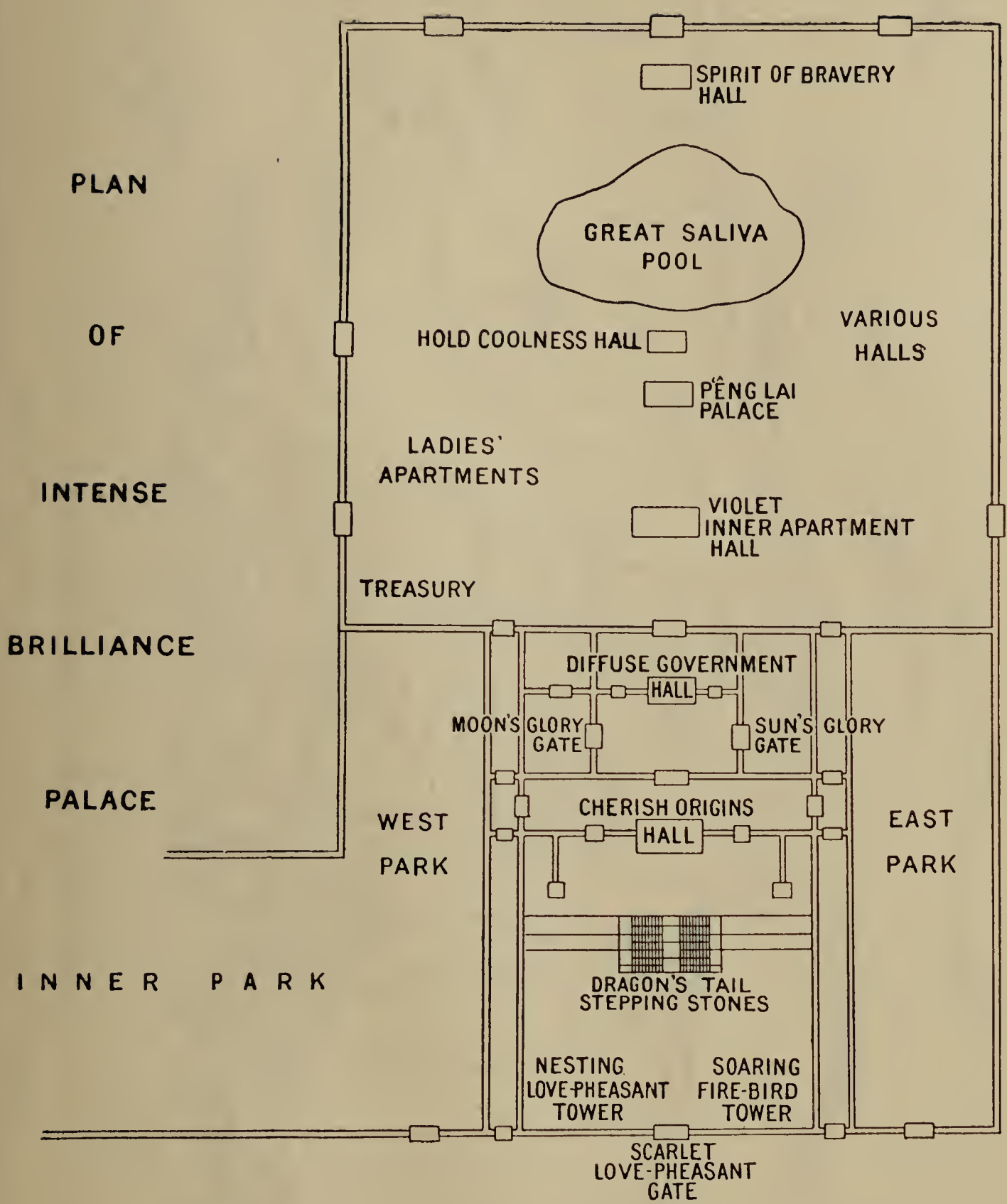

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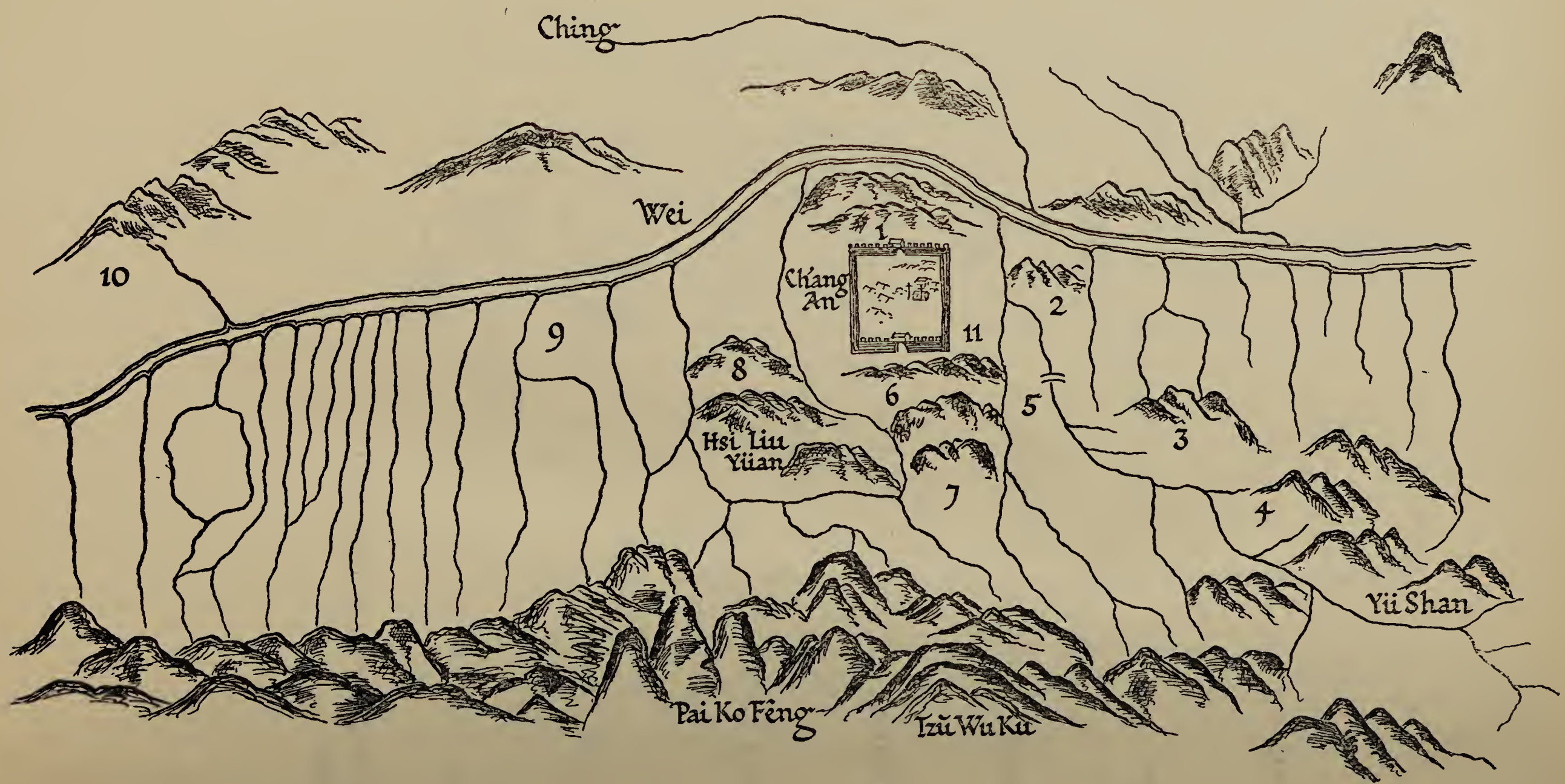


Sketch Map of Country about Ch'ang An.
Reconstructed by Mr. Nung Chu from *Ch'ang An Record.*

KEY TO SKETCH MAP OF COUNTRY ABOUT CH'ANG AN
NOTES TAKEN FROM THE *CH'ANG AN RECORD*

1. Lung Shou Shan, Dragon's Head Hill, its height two hundred feet. During the T'ang dynasty the high places to East and North were used as sites for the various buildings of the Ta Ming Kung, Intense Brilliance Palace.

2. T'ung Jên Yüan, Bronze Men Plain. Ch'in, Shih Huang Ti known as the Great First Emperor, cast twelve bronze men from the weapons collected among the people; each weighed 'twenty-four times ten thousand *chin*' (a *chin* is about one pound and a half). The Minister Tung Cho of Han melted ten of these men and minted them into coins; the Emperor Ming of Wei tried to move the remaining two to Lo Yang, but failing to transport them, abandoned them South of the Great Road.

3. Li Shan, Black Charger Hill; the north peak of Lan Tien, whence issued the hot springs, and where stood the Hua Ch'ing Kung, Glory of Purity Palace.

4. Lan Tien Shan, Indigo Fields Hill; standing thirty *li* S.E. of Ch'ang An; beautiful jade was found there.

5. Pa Ch'iao, Pa Waters Bridge; over four hundred feet long, twenty-four feet wide, built five *li* from the Capital; ten thousand willows planted there. The people of Ch'ang An, when taking leave of their friends, came to this place, and snapping willow branches, presented them, and said farewell.

6. Lo Yu Yüan, Joy of Travellers' Plain.

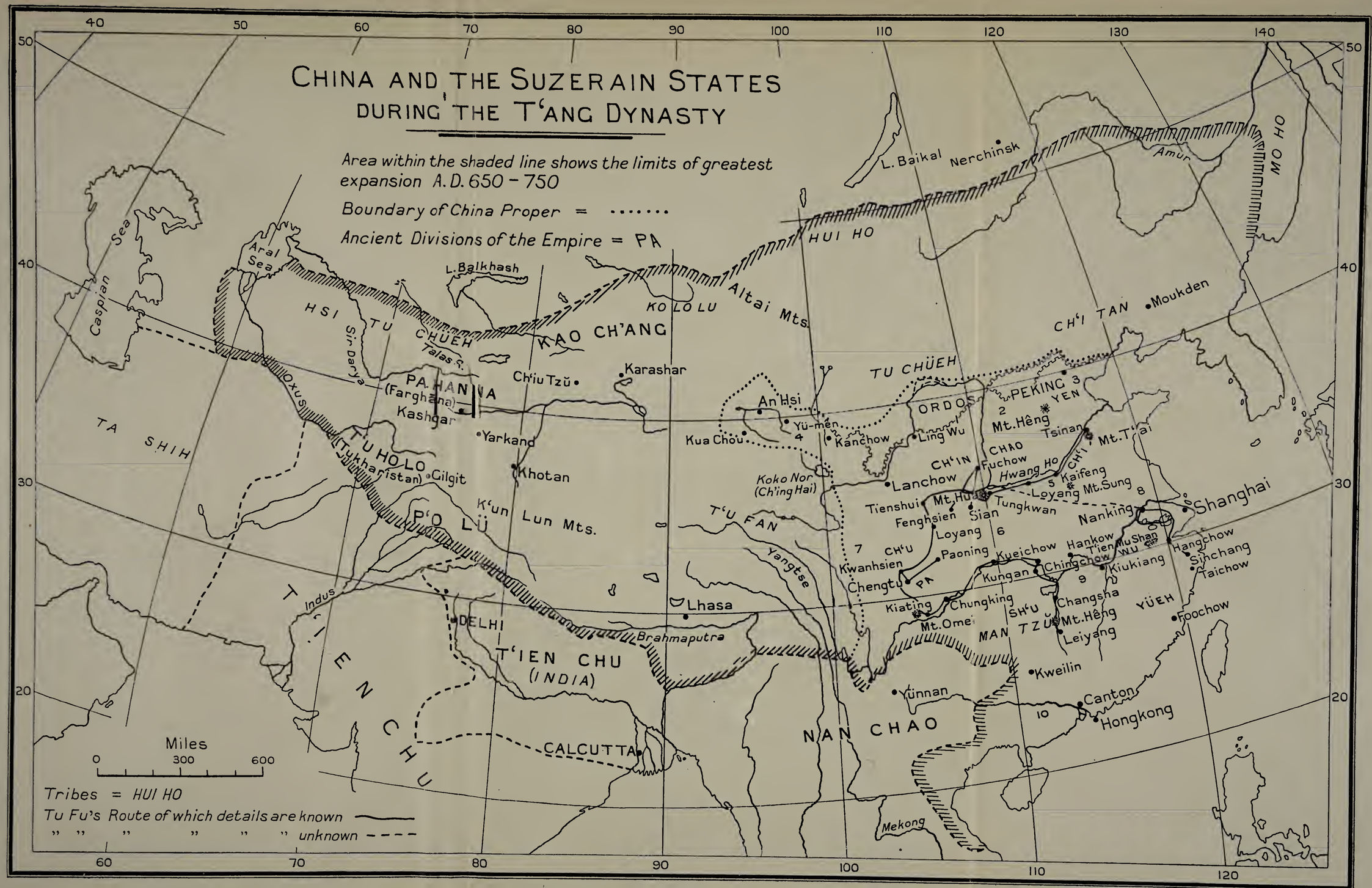
7. Shao Ling Yüan, Lesser Tombs Plain; site of the tomb of Han Hsüan Ti's consort. Tu Fu's birthplace was here.

8. Kao Yang Yüan, High Brilliant Plain; site of the Palace known as A Fang Kung, built by the Great First Emperor.

9. Mei Pei, Lovely Waters Slope; in this place the view of waters is exquisite. Tu Fu went here with Ts'ên Ts'an, see page 171.

10. Ma Wei P'o, Horse Ridge Slope; the place where Kuei-fei died.

11. Ch'ü Chiang, the Zigzag or Crooked River.


CHINA AND THE SUZERAIN STATES
DURING THE T'ANG DYNASTY
Area within the shaded line shows the limits of greatest expansion A.D. 650 - 750
Boundary of China Proper = ...
Ancient Divisions of the Empire = PA
Miles
0 300 600
Tribes = HUI HO
Tu Fu's Route of which details are known
" " " " " " unknown
Caspian Sea
Aral Sea
L. Balkhash
L. Baikal
Nerchinsk
Amur
MO HO
HUI HO
KO LO LU
Altai Mts.
KAO CH'ANG
HSI TU CHÜEH
Sir Darya
Talas R.
PA HANNA
(Farghāna)
Kashgar
Ch'iu Tzŭ
Karashar
Yarkand
Khotan
Oxus
TA SHIH
T'U HO LO
(Tukharistan)
Gilgit
K'un Lun Mts.
P'O LÜ
Indus
T'IEN CHU
DELHI
T'IEN CHU
(INDIA)
CALCUTTA
Brahmaputra
Lhasa
T'U FAN
Yangtse
Koko Nor
(Ch'ing Hai)
Kua Chou
An Hsi
Yü-mên
Kanchow
TU CHÜEH
ORDOS
Ling Wu
CH'I TAN
Moukden
PEKING
YEN
Mt. Hêng
Tsinan
Mt. T'ai
CH'IN
CHAO
Fuchow
Hwang Ho
Kaifeng
Loyang
Mt. Sung
Lanchow
Tienshui
Mt. Hua
Sian
Tungkwan
Fenghsien
Loyang
Nanking
Shanghai
CH'U
Paoning
Kwanhsien
Chengtu
PA
Kueichow
Hankow
T'ien Mu Shan
WU
Chingchow
Kiukiang
Hangchow
Sinchang
Taichow
Kungan
Kiating
Chungking
Mt. Omei
SH'U
Changsha
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